









## **For Reference**

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Obsessed with Sport

by Joseph Epstein

July 1976 \$1.00

# Harper's

Magazine

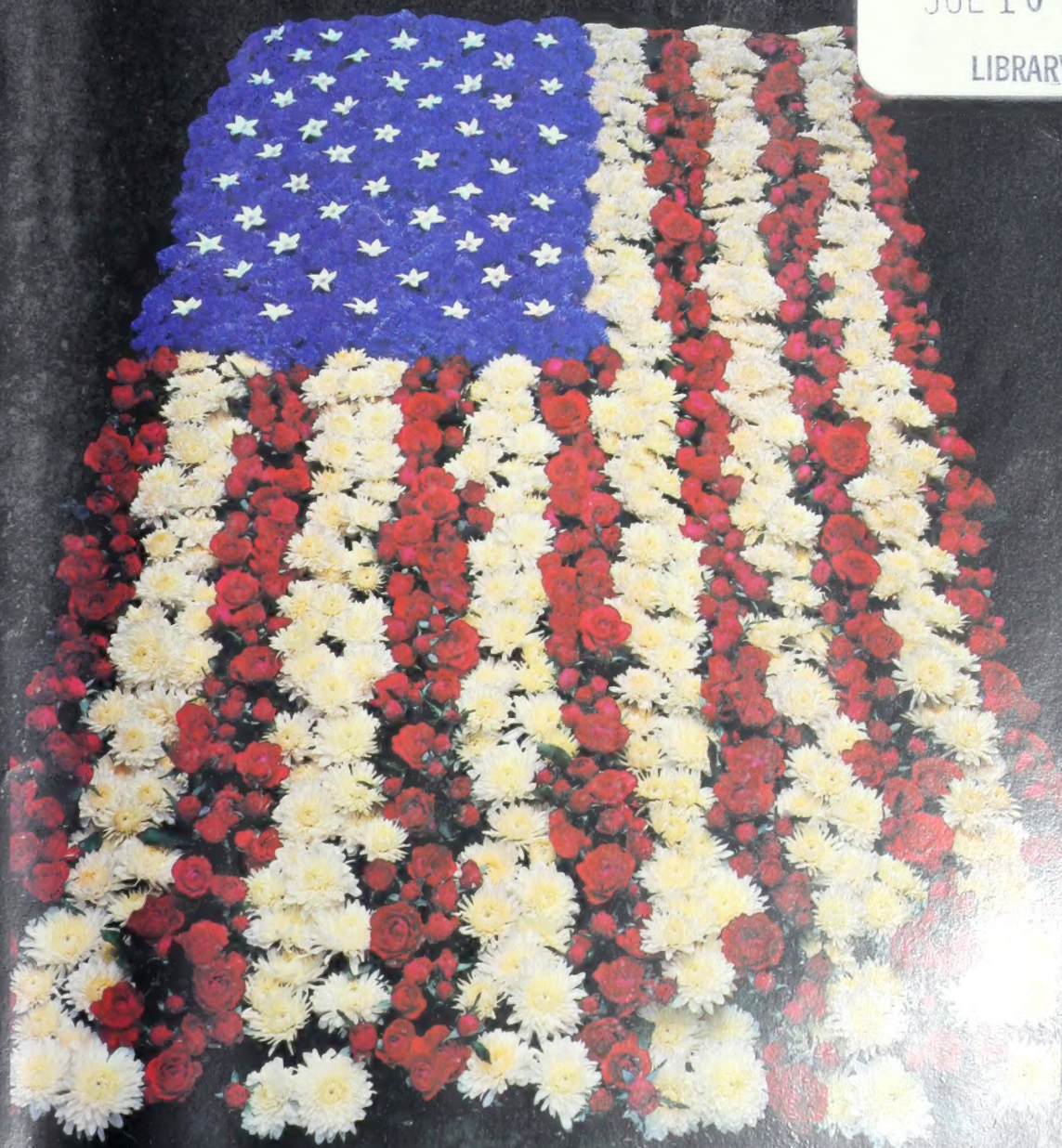
## Tom Wolfe: THE INTELLIGENT CO-ED'S GUIDE TO AMERICA

THE  
HISTORICAL  
PRESENT

Essays on  
politics and  
the American  
elections  
by Elmer Davis,  
Lord Macaulay,  
Walter Lippmann,  
Frederick Lewis  
Allen,  
Mark Twain,  
and others

Ella Leffland:  
LAST  
COURTESIES  
A Short Story

REVIEWS BY:  
Evan Connell,  
James Fallows,  
Reed Whittemore



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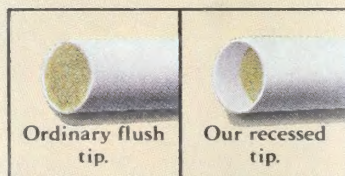


*The thoughtful choice in low-tar smoking.*



# The low-tar cigarette with the recessed tip.

*Most low-tar cigarettes are flush-tipped. So tar build-up is flat against your lips.*



*But Parliament has the recessed tip. That means tar buildup never touches your lips. All you get is that neat, clean taste.*

*So if you're trying to find a low-tar cigarette that tastes good, why not choose the one with the difference, Parliament with the recessed tip.*



Box: 14mg. 'tar,' 0.8mg. nicotine—Kings: 16mg. 'tar,' 0.9mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report Nov. '75

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

# Parliament



# What will it take to make jobs for your children?

324105

We need to get unemployed people back onto business pay-rolls — and the sooner the better. Right now, America needs millions of jobs.

But there's also the challenge of a growing work force — young people reaching working age, and others entering the job market. Your children and ours. That work force will grow by at least 1½ million *every year* from now through 1980.

What will it take to create *new* jobs for them?

**Money.** The huge sums of money (investment capital) companies need to upgrade and expand their facilities. It's *those* facilities that, when business picks up, maintain jobs and create new ones. How much money's needed? The average investment to create a single new job opportunity in manufacturing is around \$25,000 today. It will be at least \$35,000 in 1980.

That multiplies out to \$37½ billion in capital investment *today* to create 1½ million new jobs. By 1980, it will take an investment of \$52½ billion.

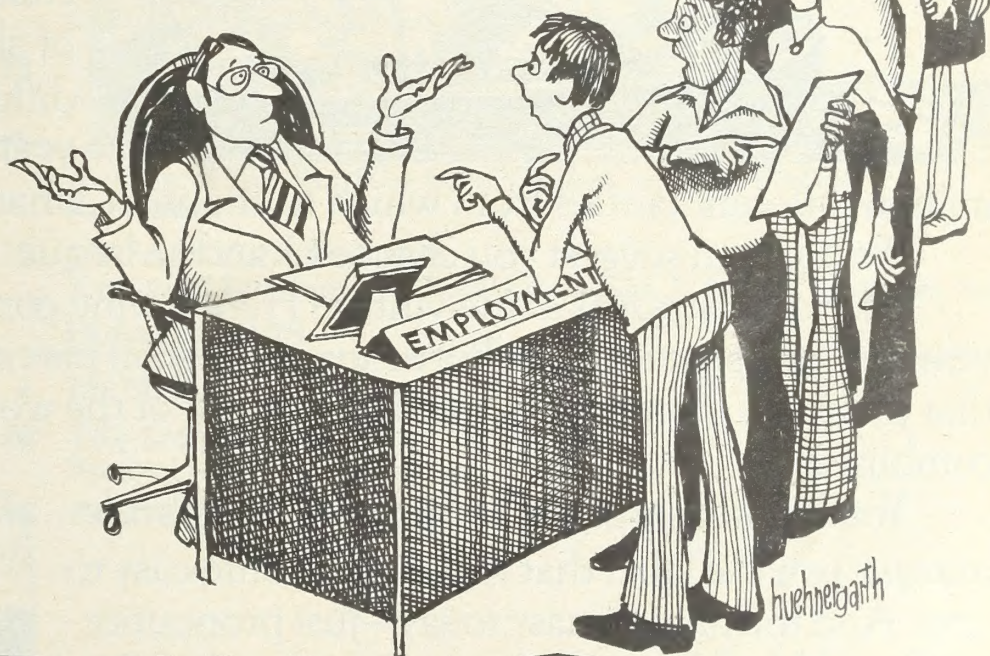
*Where will that money come from?*

The key to getting the money we need for expansion and improvement of our plants is better

earnings\* — earnings that can be invested in our operations and that will encourage investors to provide us additional money.

But this alone is not enough because under present Federal tax laws the government would take too much of any additional dollars we can earn. What we need now is Federal tax reform to help lower barriers to capital formation.

\*In 1975, Bethlehem's earnings after taxes were only 4.8% of revenues.



## Bethlehem



### How you can help gear up the American economy

The tax-writing committees of the U.S. Congress are studying the subject of "Capital Formation."

Here are four tax measures which we believe the Congress should enact to encourage industrial expansion and to create jobs:

- (1) five-year capital recovery system,
- (2) 12% permanent investment tax credit,
- (3) write-off of the

costs of pollution control facilities in the year they are incurred,

- (4) eliminate the double taxation of corporate profits paid out as dividends.

If you agree that revisions in present Federal tax laws are needed to provide the additional capital for more and better jobs, we ask you to tell that to your

Senators and Congressman. For a free copy of the folder, "Project Mainspring — with your help it can wind up the American economy again," write: Public Affairs Dept., Room 476 H, Bethlehem Steel Corp., Bethlehem, PA 18016.



# And some wines go best with salad.



Experts agree. Some wine is best with meat. Some is best with fish. And some is best mixed with a little oil and tossed in the salad. Or out the window.

But how can a wine buyer tell the vin from the vinegar?

French wine is the best. But even French wine can be a jungle.

There are thousands of chateaus, hundreds of shippers, a dozen different vintage years — perhaps a

million different bottles from which to choose... what?

We'd like to suggest you choose Grande Marque.

Grande Marque is a fine vintage French wine, consistent from year to year. It comes from Bordeaux, that small part of France that produces more great wine than the rest of the world combined.

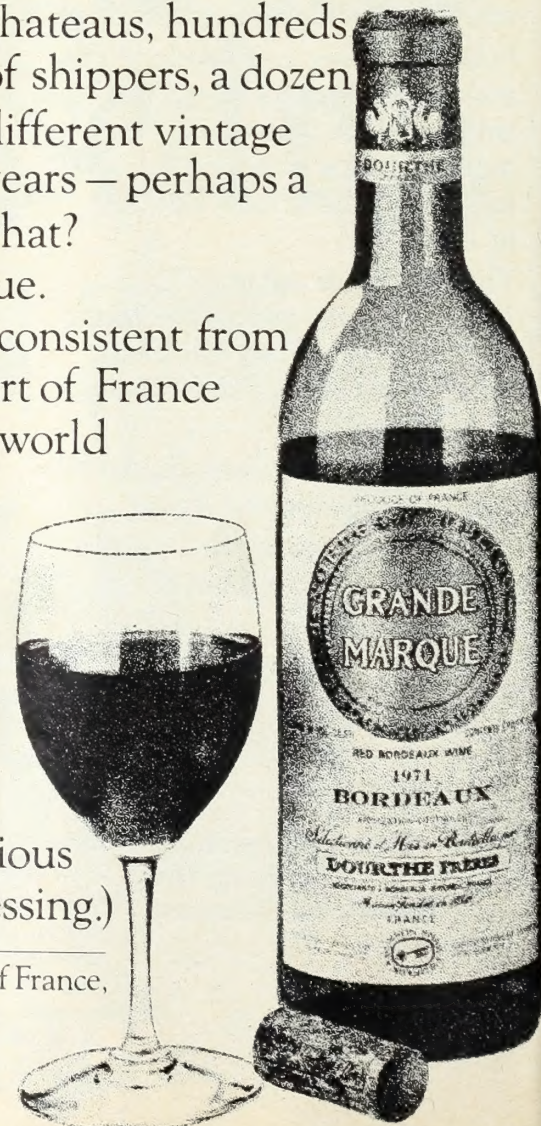
You'll find a large gold seal (literally a *grande marque*) on the label that makes the bottle easy to spot. And the name is easy to say — just pronounce it "Grand Mark."

There's a Grande Marque red and a Grande Marque white, each at a price that's very right.

A price that's little enough to spend for a delicious French wine. (And too much to spend for French dressing.)



"All the French you need to know." Grande Marque is a product of France, imported by Munson Shaw, New York.





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# LETTERS

## Political questions

Lewis Lapham's "Easy Chair" column in the May issue of *Harper's* includes at least two important inaccuracies. First, it is totally and offensively untrue that I ever ordered "a hatchet job" on Steven Brill, the author of *Harper's* piece entitled, "Jimmy Carter's Pathetic Lies." Second, *Time* has not endorsed Carter or any other Presidential candidate.

We did our story questioning Brill's article because it had become an important part of the political dialogue at the time and because we knew from prior reporting, incorporated in a story in our February 2 issue, that Brill's piece included factual inaccuracies. Brill, for instance, claimed that Carter, in his campaign for governor in 1970, had used certain TV commercials that were of questionable taste. The commercials, in fact, never existed.

I find it strange that in his "Easy Chair" column Lapham never responded to our primary points that Brill's article included some important factual inaccuracies and that several of the issues he raised were quite trivial. As for Lapham's general description of how this story was supposedly handled at *Time*, characterizing our researcher's task as a "strange and awful thing," all that is so absurd as to defy comment.

HENRY GRUNWALD  
Managing Editor  
*Time*  
New York, N.Y.

The "Easy Chair" piece in the May issue is a mess of pathetic lies—"contemptible lies" might be more accurate—in its references to me.

The lines attributed to me in a conversation with Steven Brill about his article on Jimmy Carter ("How could you do such a thing?" Lydon said. "He's the only good guy we've got") are sheer fantasy. I know I never spoke those words because I never thought those thoughts. The supposed tone of my conversation with Mr. Brill ("Lydon reproached him for his betrayal of the Democratic cause") is another wild fabrication. When I wrote an item last January about the sudden end of Mr. Carter's charmed life in the national press, I called Mr. Brill, asked him about his forthcoming piece, and quoted him on it. My recollection is of as brief and businesslike an interview as reporters can have with each other.

If my imagined view of Jimmy Carter as "The only good guy we've got" raises "a number of interesting questions," why didn't you raise one or two when you and I spoke at some length on March 18? Had you mentioned that phony quote at all, I would have told you what nonsense it was.

You write that *Time* magazine's description of Mr. Brill as "a hit man . . . the liberal enforcer" "appears to have come" from me. How *Time* puts its stories together knows only God. But, as you well know, the magazine did not ask to interview me on Mr. Brill, and it most certainly did not report my views on him or his work.

CHRISTOPHER LYDON  
The New York Times  
Washington, D.C.

LEWIS H. LAPHAM REPLIES:

In support of his adverbs, Mr. Grunwald announces the nonexistence of certain television commer-

cials. He presents his fact with laborious emphasis, as if it were a great stone with which he crushes the presumption of Steven Brill, the irrefutable proof that *Time* magazine knows what's what.

The two commercials were shown to Mr. Brill in December of last year by Gerald Rafshoon, Jimmy Carter's director of media and communications. Mr. Rafshoon said that both of them had appeared on Georgia television during the gubernatorial campaign of 1970. In a column published in the *Atlanta Constitution* on July 21, 1970, the paper's political editor described the more offensive of the two commercials in precisely the terms used by Mr. Brill.

Mr. Grunwald's letter also contains two errors of attribution. The phrase "hatchet job" and the characterization of the research task as "a strange and awful thing" were both taken from the *Time* researcher who did the work.

As for Mr. Lydon, I am at a loss to account for his conception of the newspaper business. He says that he doesn't know how *Time* came by its characterization of Mr. Brill as "a hit man . . . the liberal enforcer." And yet, when I asked about the origins of the quotation, he refused to discuss the matter unless he was granted the privilege of speaking off the record. Once granted that privilege, he complained at length about the way in which *Time's* Washington correspondent had duped him. Yes, he said, it was true that he had spoken of Mr. Brill in the language that *Time* attributed to "a Washington-based political correspondent," but it had never occurred to him that he was being used as a source of information. I assume that he would offer



# *The Only Way*

*No matter what we say  
or show in our advertising efforts,  
or what others have said  
in praise of Seville, it is only in the driving  
that you will fully understand  
what kind of car it is.*

*No amount of words or pictures  
can come close to describing the  
new experience that is Seville.*

*So, please, drive one.  
Your Cadillac dealer will be pleased  
to make one available at your convenience.  
It's really the only way.*

*Seville*  
BY CADILLAC



a similar explanation of his remarks to Mr. Brill. I didn't raise any further questions with him because he had declared himself off the record. It is pointless to ask anything of a man who declines to vouch for his own statements.

Nor do I think that such a man can now expect me to preserve his confidence. Having spoken off the record, Mr. Lydon then tries to use his privilege as a weapon. He calls me a contemptible liar but assumes that I will continue to protect him so that he may sustain his false assertion.

Thank you sincerely for the tandem of factual analyses, Steven Brill's exposition of Jimmy Carter and Mr. Lapham's postscript on media manipulation. The campaign tricks of Carter's flack Jody Powell smell mightily of 1972's dirty tricks politics, and this raises not so much the specter of CREEP, but the red clay shades of traditional political fighting we are heir to in Georgia.

The well of Carter's ideology is shallow. Jimmy's bathetic piety on the campaign trail comes from the methodology of election battles in our state—long preceding but surely including the successful Carter race against Carl Sanders in 1970. In the current Presidential contests, the hypocrisy of long tradition is writ large by Carter's beguiling charades. The substance within the play is not so obvious, perhaps, on the national scene as it is back home.

While a majority of Georgians may yet vote for Jimmy in the state's upcoming first Presidential preference primary—for reasons that may include simple boosting of home-boy-going-places—not all of them are deceived by his pathetic lies. A media campaign proceeds out of Atlanta with newspapers there falling into automaton steps with Carter's vacuous, grinning pronouncements and his thrust toward power. Fortunately, the Brill article was reprinted in the local newspaper. Analytical Georgians can see clearly the truth of Brill's exposition—an old-style politician with a new veneer, talking from both sides of his face and making no sense in the balance.

But this may not have been as clear outside the state had *Harper's* not provided this type of analysis.

RAY E. TILLEY  
Athens, Ga.

## The Moynihan mystique

Congratulations on the publication of "The Warrior Intellectuals," by Frances FitzGerald [May].

It is nonsense from beginning to end. But just as James Chace's incoherent lament, on "American Jingoism," in the same issue, "The Warrior Intellectuals" is important as a symptom, a rationalization—however tenuous—of the feeling of those who have made a living and acquired status by airing their guilt feelings, displaced—from God knows where—onto the U.S. as a political and cultural entity. How dare Moynihan, how dare *Commentary* (one had expected better from specialists in guilt) assert that America is not to be blamed for all the ills that flesh is heir to, including poor countries, misgovernment, racism, famine, and war? How dare they interrupt the psychodrama confused with foreign policy by those who think of the U.N. as a place for diplomatic negotiation?

Miss FitzGerald's is an important piece, and I'm serious in congratulating you on publishing it. Such symptoms should be aired; some readers, to be sure, will share in the hysterics, but, for most, FitzGerald and Chace will have shown that the disease Moynihan has diagnosed still is rampant in the liberal Establishment, and the news, if not good, is important.

ERNEST VAN DEN HAAG  
New York, N.Y.

Thank you for the thoughtful critique on Moynihan. I doubt that any rebuttal he would write could be as logical and persuasive as the one by Frances FitzGerald. You are to be congratulated for printing the material, and, of course, FitzGerald is to be congratulated for dispelling the Moynihan mystique. ELIZABETH GROSS  
Chicago, Ill.

## What the workers want

Samuel C. Florman ["The Job-Enrichment Mistake," May] is to be commended for exposing one of the fallacious assumptions supporting the job-enrichment fad. He states what should be obvious to everyone: all employees are not interested in finding "self-actualization" in their work. Therefore, "alienation" and "blue-

collar blues" cannot be eradicated simply by increasing the variety, the activity, or the responsibility involved in a given task.

Unfortunately, some of the fad-dists (usually sociologists) commit an even more serious error by urging management to abandon a single-minded devotion to the traditional objective of economic efficiency and embrace the more humanistic goal of promoting employee job satisfaction. The error is based on their failure to understand that it is the environment in which an economic organization operates, characterized by limited resources and unlimited wants, which defines the purpose of all managerial activity.

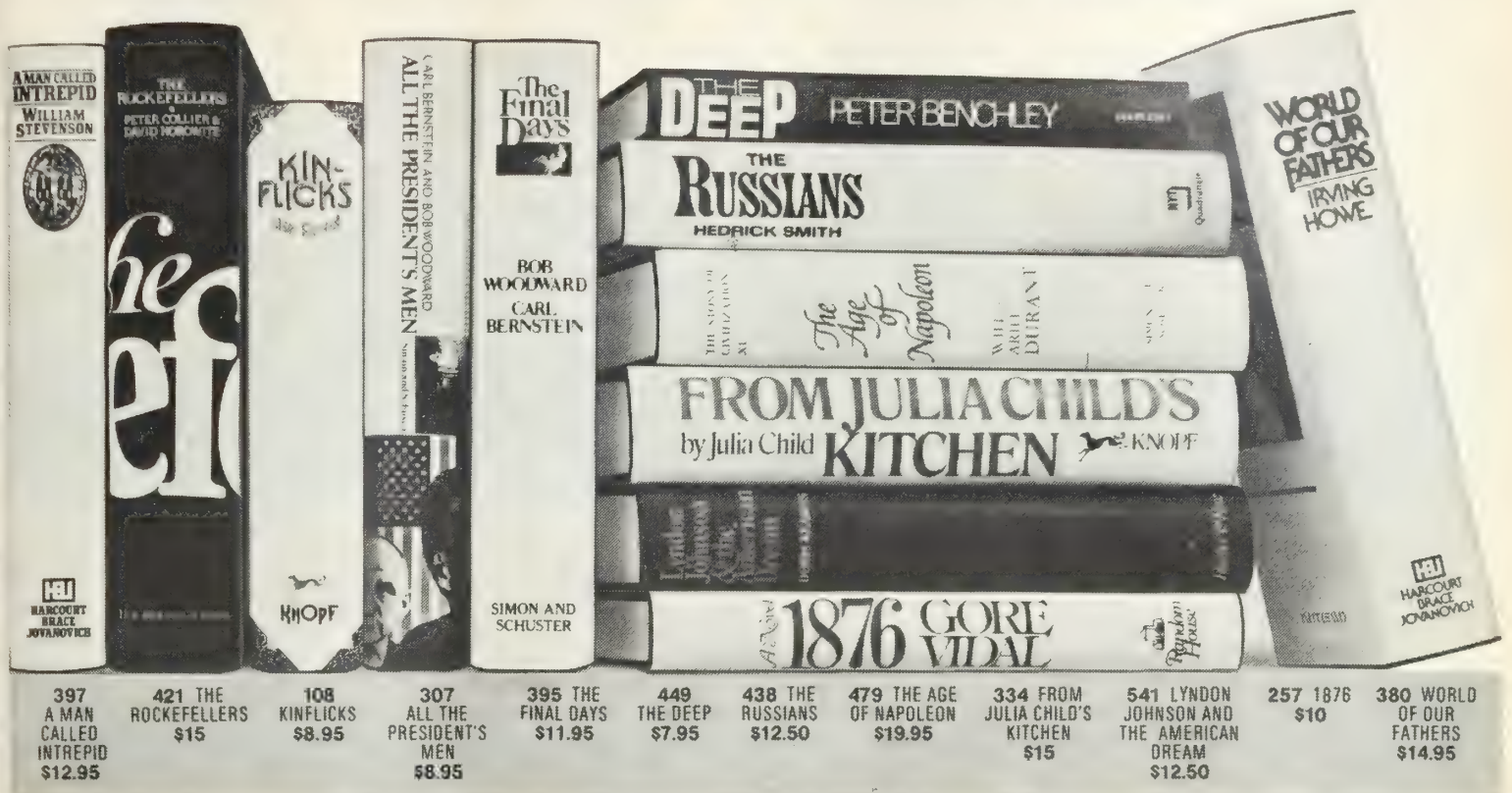
Efficiency is a relative concept. The meaning depends on the specific conditions faced by any given organization. To survive in a relatively free market, management—given a specific set of conditions—will seek to use those techniques which best promote efficiency and lower cost. However, it is not job enrichment or job fractionalization as such, any more than it is employee satisfaction or employee dissatisfaction as such, which motivates management. The goal is the efficient use of resources under a given set of conditions. Job enrichment and job fractionalization are *techniques*; employee satisfaction and employee dissatisfaction are *by-products*. Therefore, depending on the conditions, efficiency may be achieved either through job enrichment or job fractionalization, either through improved job satisfaction or under conditions where the employee suffers increased "alienation."

Before selecting a given technique, management must analyze the direct and indirect as well as the short- and long-term consequences of both job enrichment and job specialization. One of the by-products of employing either technique will be the possible effect on employee attitudes. These attitudes can have a positive, neutral, or negative effect on output in either the short or the long run. To the extent that management can anticipate that the choice of technique will affect productivity and cost, to that extent employee satisfaction or dissatisfaction—along with all the other cost factors—will be given managerial attention.

KARL F. SIMPSON, JR.  
Chicago, Ill.



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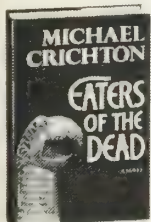
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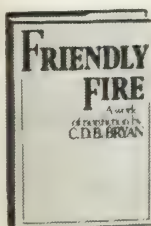
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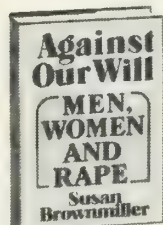
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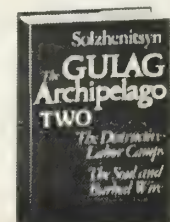
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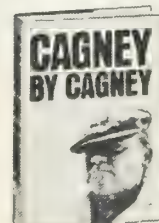


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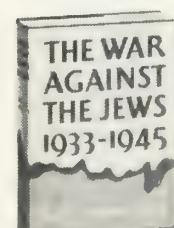
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# RECEIVED IDEAS



The summer inventory

by Lewis H. Lapham

**T**HE TROUBLE WITH most conversations these days is that they depend almost entirely upon the exchange of received opinions. People do not have the time to think about what they are saying, and so they rely on an inventory of informed views that make sense in all sectors of enlightened discourse.

In theory this seems to be a convenient arrangement, much like the use of credit cards in all the better stores. In practice it doesn't work so well because the market in ideas is unstable. What was the correct thing to say as recently as two years ago suddenly becomes wrong or illiterate. Last summer's brilliant hypothesis stands revealed as this winter's idiot canard.

As an editor I must make lists of the season's opinions. Otherwise I run the risk of commissioning articles about subjects or issues that have ceased to exist. From time to time I rewrite the list, amending it to coincide with latest reports from the world of intellectual fashion. On the occasion of what has become the Bicentennial issue of *Harper's Magazine*, it occurs to me to publish random notes from the current list. As an index of leading opinion in the summer of 1976 the notes might prove useful to Presidential candidates or writers of Fourth of July speeches.

**WATERGATE:** proof that the American system works. If it weren't for the vigilance of the press, we might

have had a dictatorship in this country. You cannot underestimate the wisdom of the American people.

**JOURNALISTS:** all irresponsible. They don't have to live with the consequences of their actions.

**FREEDOM OF THE PRESS:** must be preserved. The safety of the Republic depends upon it.

**CRITICS:** always wrong. They speak only to each other.

**SCHOOLS:** worthless. Nobody knows how to read or write. One of the reasons for everything that is the matter with the country. No standards.

**JIMMY CARTER:** to be admired for his ruthlessness. What politics is all about.

**LABOR UNIONS:** as corrupt as big business.

**BUSINESSMEN:** all thieves. Extend the analogy between multinational corporations and organized crime.

**THE ENVIRONMENT:** sacrosanct. Mention the number of species that have been obliterated by the inhumanity of man. Become eloquent about Indians and baby whales.

**SEXUAL REVOLUTION:** a victory for women.

**DOCTORS:** incompetent. Most operations are unnecessary. You are more likely to be killed in a hospital than in a traffic accident.

**THE ART OF CONVERSATION:** extinct. Replaced by television.

**GOSSIP:** the only truth. Say that you learn more from reading Suzy  
*Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.*

than from reading James Reston.

**GOVERNMENT:** too much of it.

**BUREAUCRACY:** the enemy of free enterprise. "We have become a nation of clerks."

**SUCCESS:** more interesting than failure. Point out that it has serious disadvantages.

**HAPPINESS:** exists only in the movies. Everybody carries around a secret disappointment.

**LITERARY PRIZES:** to be despised. "The judgment of mediocrity." If you obtain one, say that it means nothing.

**AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY:** the work of racists and imperialists. The United States seeks to establish hegemony in the Indian Ocean.

**HEGEMONY:** (meaning unknown)

**ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS:** under siege. They must be restored to a state of grace.

**LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY:** no longer exists. Nobody can command his own family, much less the state.

**THE 1960S:** not what everybody thought they were. The reason for all our troubles. Talk about extravagant expectations.

**COLLEGE STUDENTS:** they have learned their lesson.

**POLITICAL ENTHUSIASM:** a waste of time. Only an imbecile looks upon politics as anything but cheap entertainment.

**THE PRESIDENCY:** awesome office.

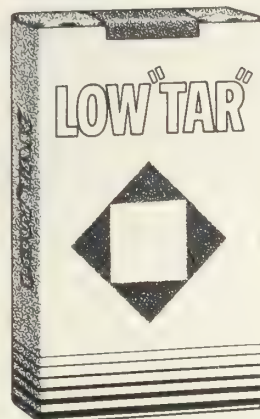
**THE ECONOMY:** impossible to understand.

**CIVIL LIBERTIES:** obscure privi-



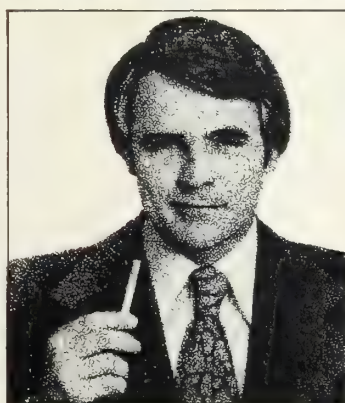


**Did your first brand taste rich  
but rough?**



**Was your second brand  
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leges granted to minorities, criminals, radicals, and the poor. Extremely expensive.

VIETNAM: we lost more than the Vietnamese. Mention it only as a pretext for a set speech about America's loss of belief in itself.

CHINA: good for the Chinese. They enjoy living in collectives and singing patriotic songs. Like summer camp.

PATRIOTISM: not enough of it.

STATISTICS: serve the same purpose as experts; they prove anything that anybody wants them to prove.

PROSTITUTION: should be legalized. Whom does it harm? Prostitutes never communicate venereal disease.

CRIMINALS: responsible for their crimes.

NATURAL RESOURCES: finite. Nature is not an assembly line. Before 1968 everybody lived in a world of infinite abundance.

PSYCHOANALYSIS: amusement available only to the rich. Like gambling or playing polo.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: a noble experiment. The Founding Fathers would be appalled by the sight of modern Washington.

LEADERS OF THE WESTERN WORLD: all pygmies. Giants no longer walk the earth.

CAPITALISM: doomed as an economic system. Demand a redistribution of wealth.

SOCIALISM: works in Sweden. Usually preceded by “inevitable.”

FARMERS: all self-reliant. They still know the meaning of the seasons.

NEGROES: vanished race. They left a few songs.

TECHNOLOGY: the Antichrist. Another reason for all our troubles.

THE THIRD WORLD: the lost Eden. Corrupted by the evil of Western colonialism.

NIXON: Horatio Alger gone wrong. Given the circumstances of his childhood, what else could anyone expect?

THE MOVIE BUSINESS: controlled by homosexuals.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION: the death of the family.

ZEN BUDDHISM: there's something in it.

THE NOVEL: no longer being written here. All the masters are foreign or dead.

DE TOCQUEVILLE: quote him whenever possible. He saw it all more than 100 years ago. □



# WHAT GIBBON KNEW



The Granger Collection

## Reflections on another bicentennial

by Jaroslav Pelikan

**B**ETWEEN 1776 AND 1788, while his fellow Englishmen in North America were designing a new Republic, Edward Gibbon was carrying out his extensive autopsy of an ancient Empire. Volume one of *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* appeared in February 1776, and the fourth volume, in which Gibbon said he would "now discharge my promise, and complete my design," was published twelve years later. Rereading the *Decline and Fall* upon its bicentennial, at the time when that of the Declaration of Independence is occupying the American consciousness, is a fascinating exercise in historical counterpoint, and also an instructive way of looking at our national observance in perspective.

It is not difficult to tell, from their style and language, that Gibbon and the Founding Fathers were contemporaries. The nice discrimination of synonyms and the penchant for the flowing period that we associate with the writings of Thomas Jefferson came with equal naturalness to Edward Gibbon. If the rhetoric that has already been produced for the American Bicentennial and the Presidential campaign is any sample of what is on the way, reading such prose during 1976 may be necessary if we are to keep our literary sanity. Generations of writers in England and America grew up studying the King James Bible and Gibbon, and the

influence of the latter is as unmistakable, if not as pervasive, as that of the former. When Winston Churchill, in *History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, speaks of a "gesture [that] was admired for its grandeur, though not perhaps for its wisdom, by the whole society," we can see that it was not only, as he said in his first set of memoirs, his long period of indentured service in the lowest form at Harrow, but his lifelong reading of Gibbon, that "got into his bones the essential structure of the normal British sentence." Studies of Gibbon's style and of his revisions have given us a picture of the author at work on one sentence at a time—testing the choice of words, improving the cadence of the language, rewriting for dramatic contrast or for logical sequence.

In outlook as well as in style the *Federalist Papers* and the *Decline and Fall* display many affinities. Both owed a great deal to the rationalism of Cicero and of eighteenth-century France. Nowadays, a superficial reading of Freud, archrationalist though he was, is often used to justify condescension toward such a trust in the processes of reason. The very word *rationalize* has come to mean not "to make sense of" or "to bring order to," but "to provide a specious rational explanation for." No one would deny, I suppose, that

Jaroslav Pelikan, Sterling Professor of History and Religious Studies at Yale, is the author of *The Christian Tradition*.

Gibbon's rationalism did sometimes go too far. It was responsible for his quite irrational hostility to orthodox Christianity, epitomized in his well-known equation of "the triumph of barbarism and religion" with "decline and fall." Yet behind such excesses there lies the conviction that it is our reason that separates us from the brute and that defends us from the brute within. One of the heroes of the *Decline and Fall* is Marcus Aurelius, who learned from the Stoics "to submit his body to his mind, his passions to his reason"; and it was his reign, together with that of his adoptive father, Antoninus Pius, that Gibbon identified as "the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous" and again as "possibly the only period of history in which the happiness of a great people was the sole object of government."

**W**E MAY WELL wonder just how much this happiness and prosperity meant to that part of "the human race," or even to the Roman populace, whom Gibbon treats in a *quasi-historical* fashion. Still, he was right in his recognition that the only alternative to the cultivation of reason and civility is what he usually called "fanaticism" or "zeal." Surely the experiences of this past decade in the United States



Gibbon's moral judgments are also relevant to our present condition, even though he voiced his moral concern by the rather arch device of quoting his sources in Latin, on the principle that "all licentious passages are left in the decent obscurity of a

learned language.” (Presumably, classical scholars cannot be corrupted.) Thus he quoted the fourth-century historian, Ammianus Marcellinus, to the effect that among some of the barbarians “*nefandi concubitus foedere copulentur mares puberes, aetatis viriditatem in eorum pollutis usibus consumpturi*,” contenting himself in English with the tantalizing observation that “the holy bands of friendship were confirmed, and sullied, by unnatural love.” Such prudish titillation (which may have encouraged an occasional schoolboy to study his Latin, though I doubt it) was put into the service of the conviction that any culture—be it Gothic or Roman or British or, for that matter, American—in which self-indulgence replaces discipline is not long for this world. Degeneracy, especially sexual degeneracy, plays an important part in Gibbon’s diagnosis. This is not because he was carrying on a vendetta against sex, for his often exaggerated polemic against monasticism shows that he regarded asceticism as unnatural, but because he recognized that a refusal to defer the gratification of desire is the beginning of the end.

for an individual or for an entire civilization. Many observers of the contemporary scene in this country find alarming evidence of such self-gratification, and it is interesting to see that here, too, Gibbon was echoing the sentiments of the patriarchs of this republic, who (whatever their individual conduct may have been) stood in dread of licentiousness as a virulent and possibly terminal disease.

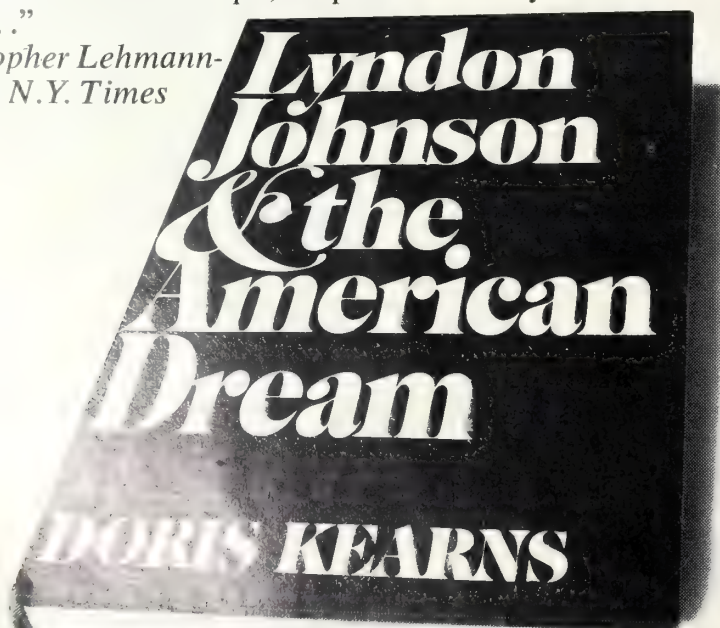
**G**IBBON'S POLITICAL interpretation of Roman history can be similarly illuminating. For example, a large percentage of his book was in fact devoted not to the Roman Empire as a whole, but to the role of its chief executive, the Roman emperor, in its growth and its degeneration. In a typical paragraph on the decay of the principate, Gibbon describes, again with resort to Latin, the sexual impotence of the emperor Honorius, who "was without passions, and consequently without talents," and he concludes by informing us that "the amusement of feeding poultry became the serious and daily care of the monarch of the West," so that, "in the eventful history of a reign of twenty-eight years, it will seldom be necessary to mention the name of the emperor Honorius."

As present scholarship has reminded us, a guiding image of the Founding Fathers in their definition of the office of chief executive, even when there was only one obvious candidate, was the legend of Cincinnatus, and the debate over the chief executive between Madison and Hamilton was, characteristically, put in the form of an exchange between "Helvidius" and "Pacificus." But they did not fully realize how powerful the office of chief executive could become. As we look back on their definition of that office and on the evolution of that definition through the centuries, the categories of explanation that come to mind seem to spring naturally from the pages of Gibbon, as even the title of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s book, *The Imperial Presidency*, indicates. Gibbon's perceptive delineation of the relation between moral character and public persona has a message not only for ancient Rome, but for any body politic.

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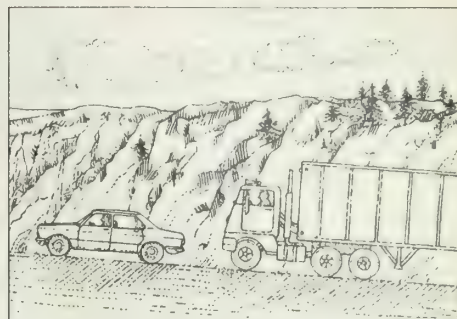
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*United States Steel asks a prominent American to speak out.*

## *“What makes America work?...technology*

*by Jerome B. Wiesner,*  
*President, Massachusetts Institute*  
*of Technology*

More than any nation in the world, the United States has the opportunity to lead mankind toward a life of greater fulfillment. This opportunity is based on benefits from our continuing advances in science and technology. It is significant that people everywhere look to the United States to provide the science and technology which they need as they, too, seek to improve their condition.

Yet the survival of our own abundant society is being doubted by many thoughtful people who share a powerful concern, a reasonable apprehension, about the impact of technology. In this enormously complex world, each large-scale technological advance has costs, side effects often unanticipated. Solutions to these in turn frequently create new and more perplexing problems, and because the scale of everything involved grows all the while at an exponential rate it becomes ever more difficult to modify the system.

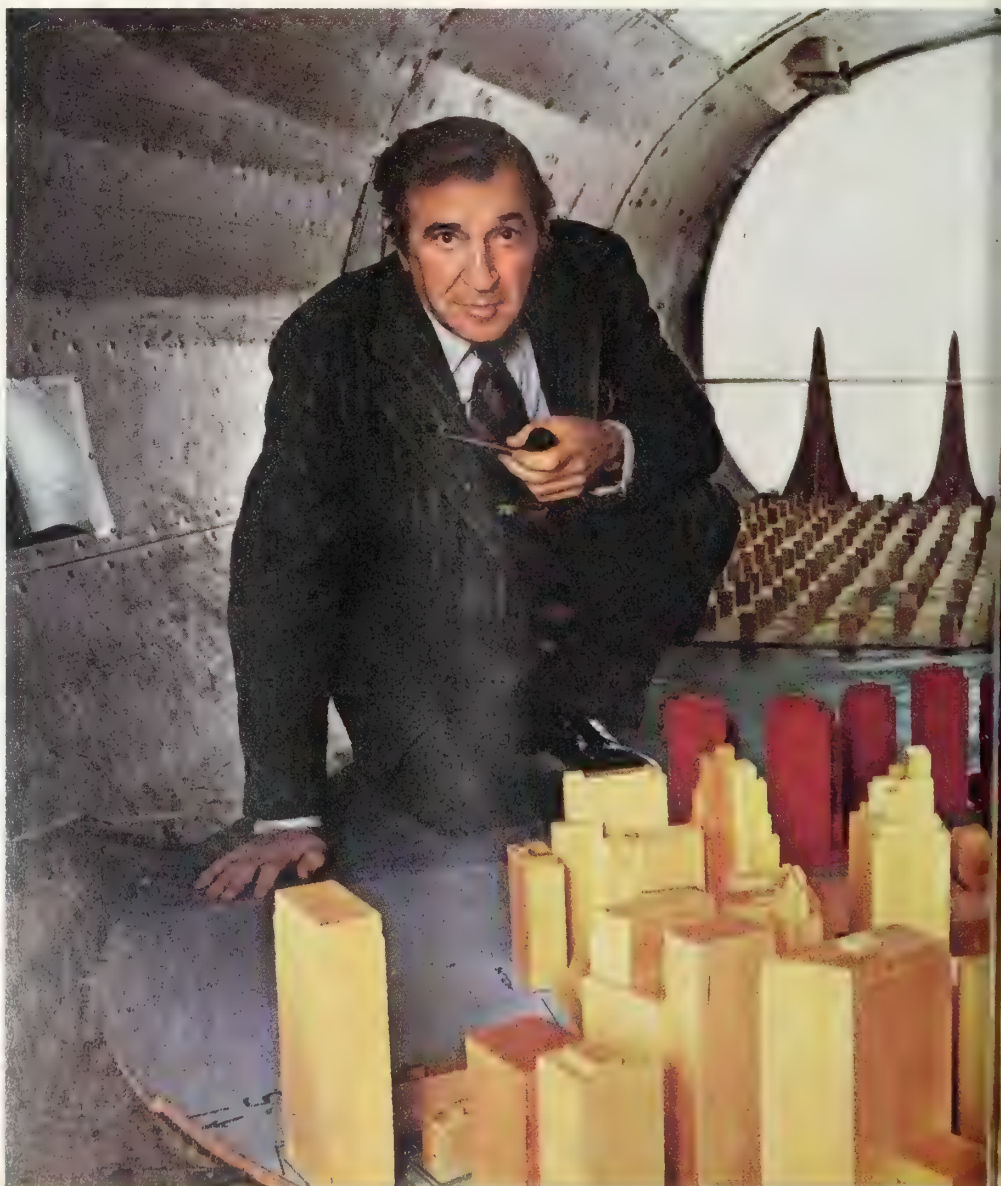
It is obvious that many of our problems—pollution of the environment, the dangers of possible nuclear war or exhaustion of natural resources, especially energy—would not exist in a primitive society, but neither would our present levels of accomplishment and well-being. One of the greatest challenges facing Americans involves learning how to live with our own spectacular

successes. Even if we wanted to, we could not reverse the forward thrust of the world. We have no choice but to continue to try to improve it—and we can—guided by our current appreciation of the potential dangers as well as benefits of new technologies.

Over the last half century, vast man-made systems have completely altered the human relationship to the natural world and even masked its dependence upon it. But there is no way for us to avoid being creatures of nature. So modern

societies can only exist in a state of dynamic equilibrium that involves a continuing adaptation both to the changing man-made world and to nature. This requires new organizational forms, new knowledge, and new technologies. We need them now more than ever.

We must learn much more about how to manage a technological society: how to anticipate problems and to plan for long-range needs, how to set realistic priorities, how to judge the feasibility of projects and develop essential technolo-





# *-and we need it more than ever."*

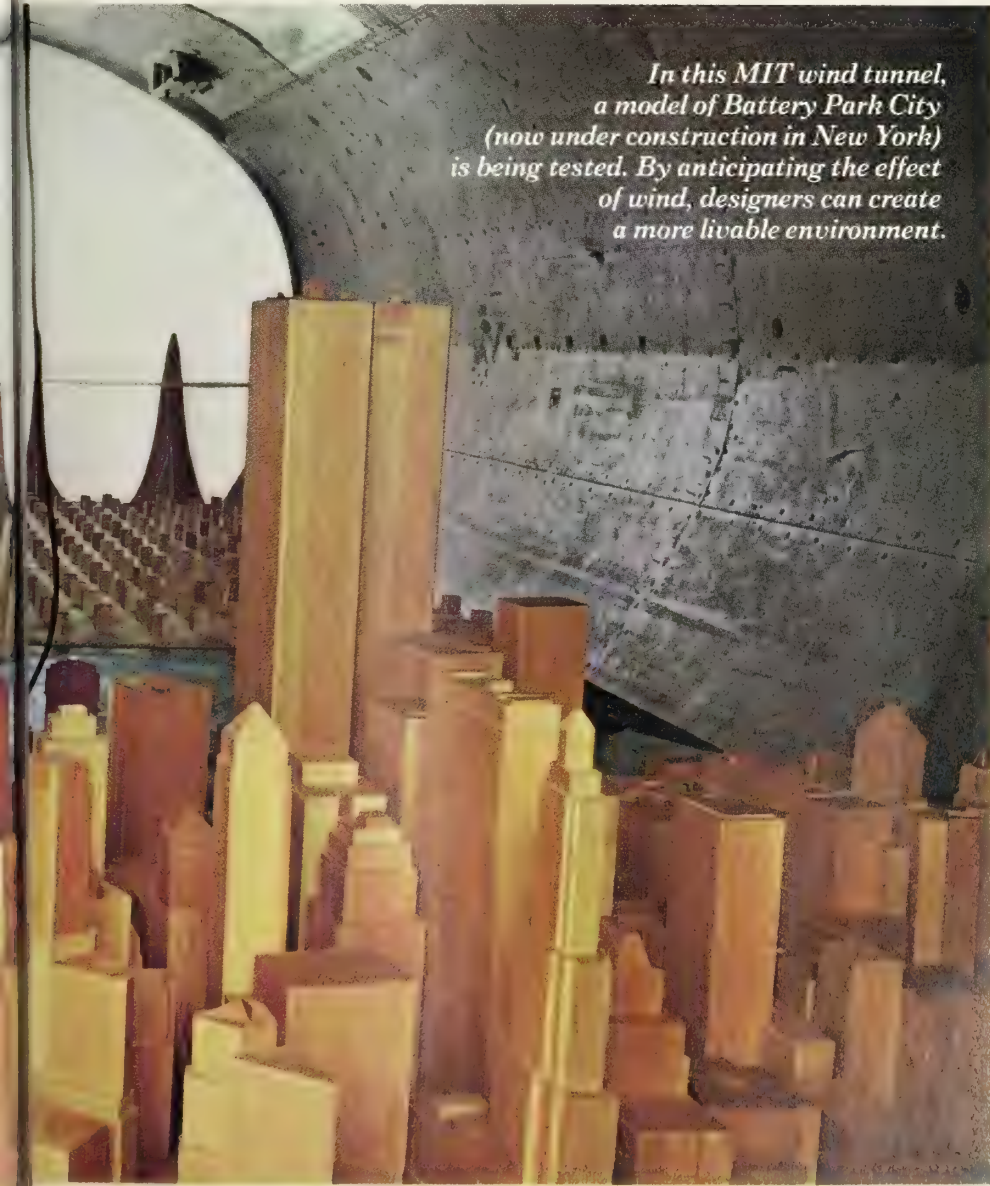
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## *Research at U.S. Steel*

*Learning to manage a technological society involves, among other things, the generation of realistic data that can be applied to the solution of existing and anticipated problems. One of the functions of the scientists and engineers at the U.S. Steel Research Laboratory is the development of such solutions within economic boundaries and a socially acceptable framework.*



*In this MIT wind tunnel, a model of Battery Park City (now under construction in New York) is being tested. By anticipating the effect of wind, designers can create a more livable environment.*

*For example, when it became apparent that supplies of high-grade iron ore, containing about 62 per cent iron in the dry state, were not inexhaustible, research programs were established to develop methods for concentrating the much larger reserves of low-grade ores, some of which contain as little as 15 per cent recoverable iron. These programs were highly successful.*

*Similarly, the effects of the energy shortage, both short-term and long-term, have been studied and six programs in twenty-five plant locations have been implemented.*

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So also, in the judgment of many, does his analysis of the role of the military in the body politic. A leitmotiv of the story is the role of the Praetorian Guard in the deterioration of the Empire, climaxing in the fearful events of A.D. 193, when the Praetorians "proclaimed that the Roman world was to be disposed of to the best bidder by public auction." It had been the glory of Rome in the days of its flowering that its citizens regarded military service as a privilege, not as a chore. This meant that the armies fought for the people, but remained subservient to the people's interests. As the Empire declined, the voracious demands of the military for support levied an increasingly vexatious burden, so that citizenship became less and less a prize to be sought. Eventually the Goths replaced the decadent Romans even in the armies of Rome, and German was fighting against German.

There is reason to believe that this unedifying spectacle helped to shape the attitude of America's founders toward military service. The Constitution's provision, in Article I, for the power "to raise and support Armies" and "to provide for calling

forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions," together with the Second Amendment's fateful prohibition of any infringement on the right to bear arms, can be seen as an effort to ensure that the new American republic would rely principally on a civilian army, rather than on something like the Praetorian Guard, for its defense.

Now that the Vietnam war is over, we need to take a second look not only at the American military involvement there, but also at the opposition to it. How much of the attack upon military service was based on its being military, and how much on its being service? I recall having some guests from Germany just at the time when the Yale community was engaged in debating the role of the ROTC on campus. Believing as I did (and do) that American colleges and universities ought to play a part in the training of the officer corps for the military services, I was hard put to explain to my guests why it was our Left that wanted officers to be trained only as professional soldiers; for in Germany the opponents of militarism have been

the ones who have tried to wrest the training of the officers from the Junkers. If we are not prepared to accept either the theory that the United States does not need a standing army or the argument that we have nothing to fear from a military establishment whose expenditures each week exceed the combined total endowments of Yale and Harvard, the activity of the Roman armies in advancing the Empire and in bringing on its downfall must be a matter of more than merely historical interest to us.

**U**NDERLYING MY entire analysis is a fundamental assumption: that the "lessons of history," if any, are neither clear nor simple, but that the peril of ignoring history is very clear indeed. This is perhaps the most direct implication of the Gibbon bicentennial for the American Bicentennial. If we absolutize our history, we shall become the slaves of the past. In the Byzantine Empire, according to Gibbon's prejudiced view, such a slavery meant that men "held in their lifeless hands the riches of their fathers, without inheriting the spirit which had created and improved that sacred patrimony."

This is scarcely our problem, for we believe in letting bygones be bygones and in putting our history behind us forever. Not slavery to the past, but what Lord Acton once called "the tyranny of the air we breathe," is the danger that threatens us. Bicentennial romanticism about America's past will not free us of this tyranny. What we need instead is an antidote to our chronic amnesia, a stimulus to see our present in the light of our past, and to see our past in the light of the history of mankind. History may be, as Gibbon said, "little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind," but it is still the best finishing school for developing skepticism without cynicism, idealism without romanticism, and conviction without dogmatism. If I read the signs aright, these are precisely the virtues we need as we move into the third century of the history of the republic, and Gibbon's account of Rome's decline and fall will help us acquire them. □

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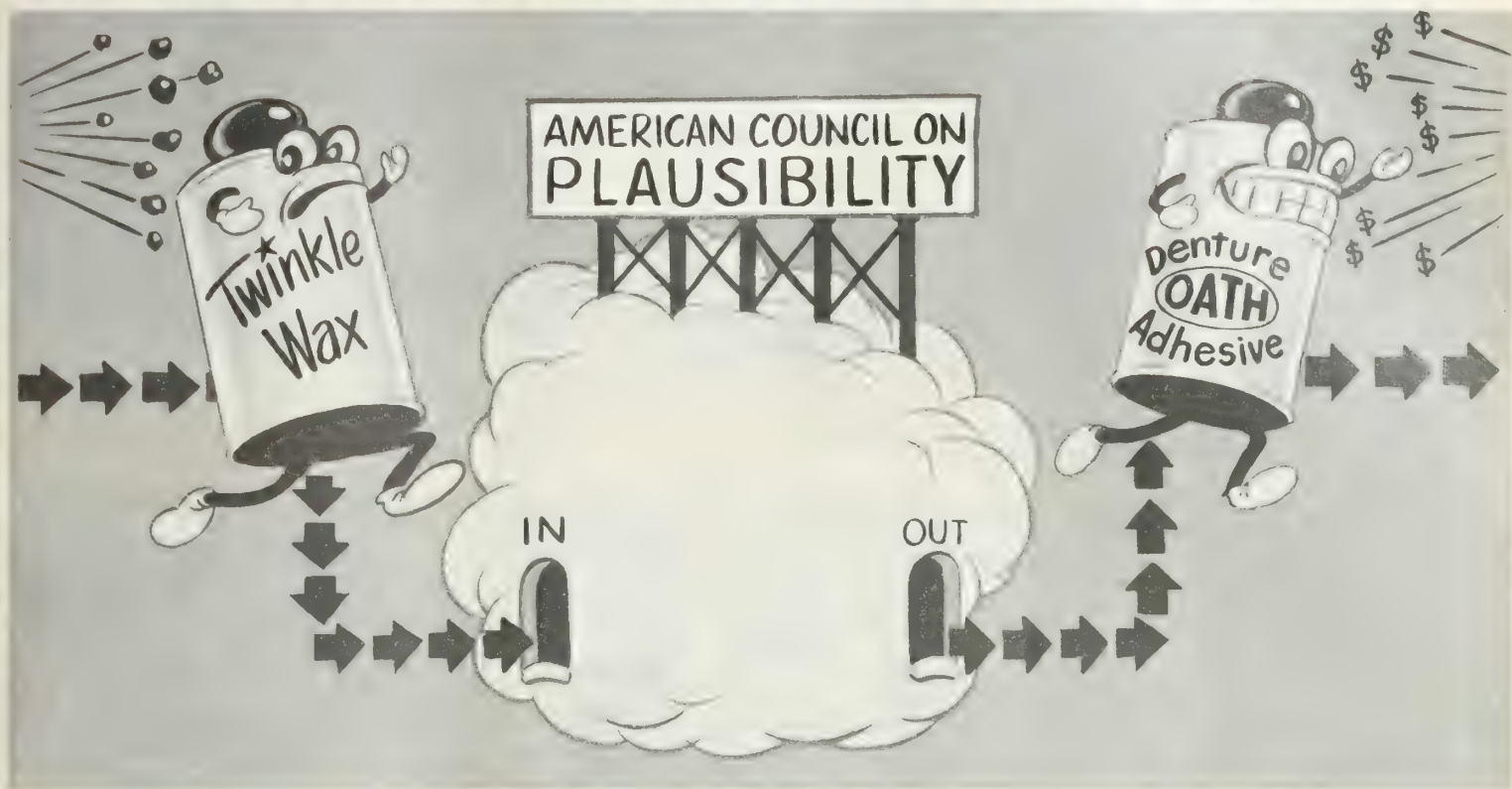
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# GOOD NEWS FOR THE BIG GUY



A prospectus

by George W. S. Trow

**W**hat is the American Council on Plausibility?

The American Council on Plausibility (a division of Multipromo Industries) is a software service group with expertise in the positioning of shoddy consumer products. Redundant products, obsolete products, unsafe products, products with sharp edges, products removed from the marketplace by court order: these and others have responded favorably to the attentions of the American Council on Plausibility.

Is the American Council on Plausibility a testing laboratory?

Absolutely not. There are *no tests*, rigorous or otherwise, associated with the council's program.

Does the American Council on Plausibility do research?

Yes, but not in depth. Under most circumstances the council prefers to *take your word for it*.

Just what does the American Council on Plausibility seek to do?

The council seeks to promote a nonjudgmental market atmosphere.

George W. S. Trow is on the staff of The New Yorker.

The council seeks, through affirmative action, to counter discriminatory practices which prevent shoddy merchandise from realizing its leadership potential. The council seeks to put *plausible concepts* within reach of *every* client, regardless of the worth of his product. *In developing a program for a client the council disregards "truth" as an absolute\* and deals with only those aspects of truth which touch on plausibility—the area of the council's concern and expertise.*

**E**xactly what services does the council make available to the manufacturer of a shoddy consumer product?

The council offers three basic programs. These are:

1. *Our renaming service.* Our wholly owned subsidiary, the American Council on Nomenclature, stands ready to aid products which, though not actually under court order, need to be brought to a strategically sound position in the marketplace. This is our least ambitious

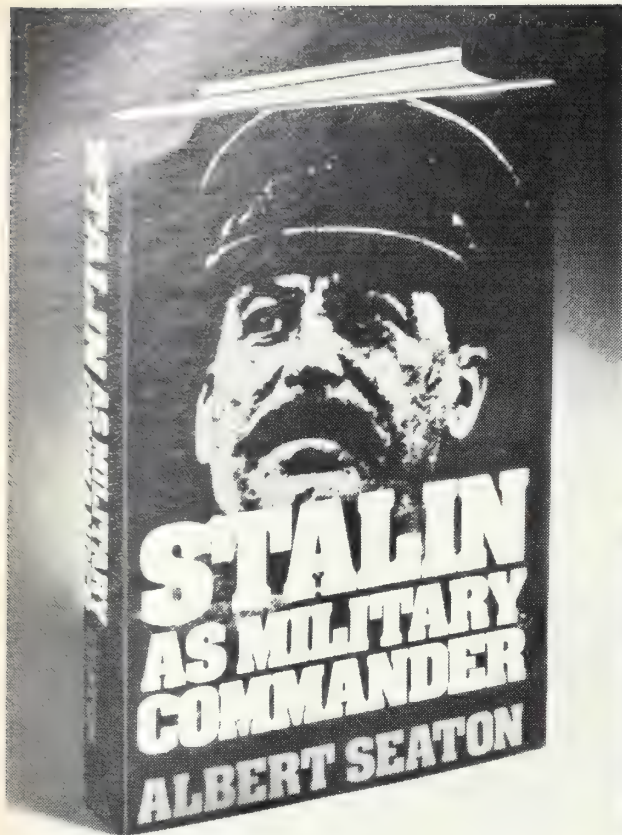
\*There is much solid philosophical argument in support of this position.

service, but it has shown itself to be effective. Intervention by the Nomenclature Council has helped many products. Salvaline Mouthwash, a particularly unattractive health aid dating from the 1930s, doubled sales when it sought a more plausible image as Escrow ("I've put my mouth in Escrow"). Squiz dishwashing liquid, which had suffered from its association with soup kitchens and penitentiaries (where it was favored because of its unpleasant odor), has prospered as New Blue Believe ("Dazzling dishes—you better Believe!"). And the council has had an amazing success with new product images based on the very same judicial process that vicious "consumer advocates" seek to turn against the business community. Fizette Deodorant Pads have taken a new lease on life as Estop Deodorant Instruments, and the council has had a great triumph in Verdict too ("Fewer cavities, mom—that's the Verdict"), which was formerly the notorious Dada-Dent.

2. *Repositioning.* Where a product no longer prospers in its original market, or where criminal action is threatened, our more ambitious repositioning service may be indicated.

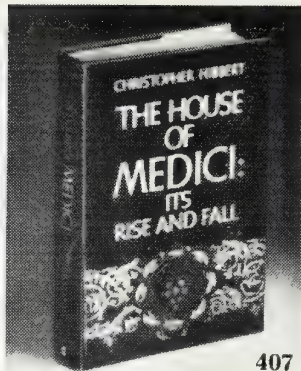


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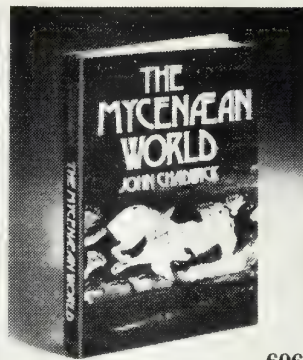
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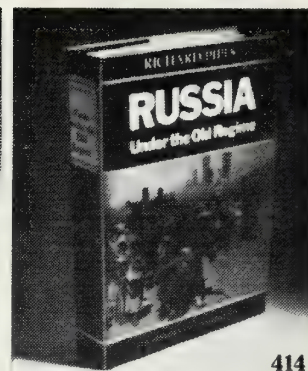
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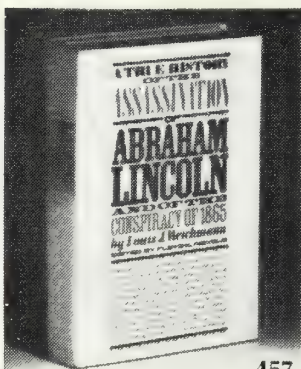
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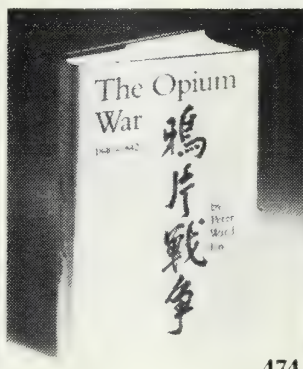
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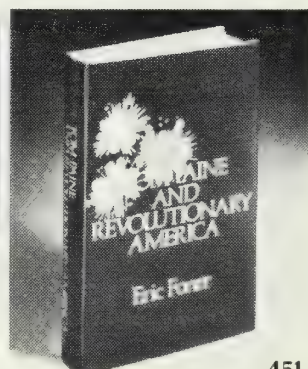
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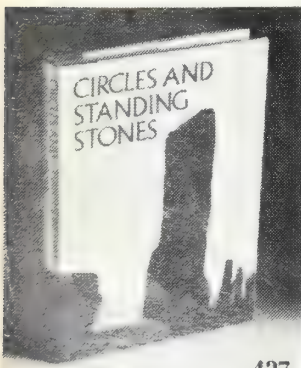
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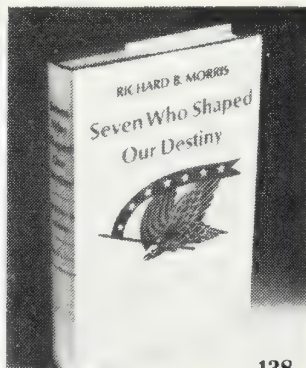
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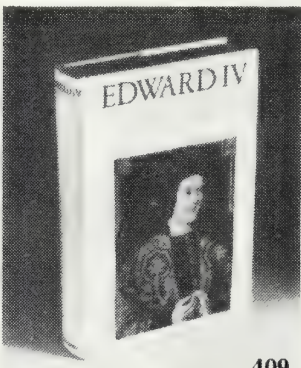
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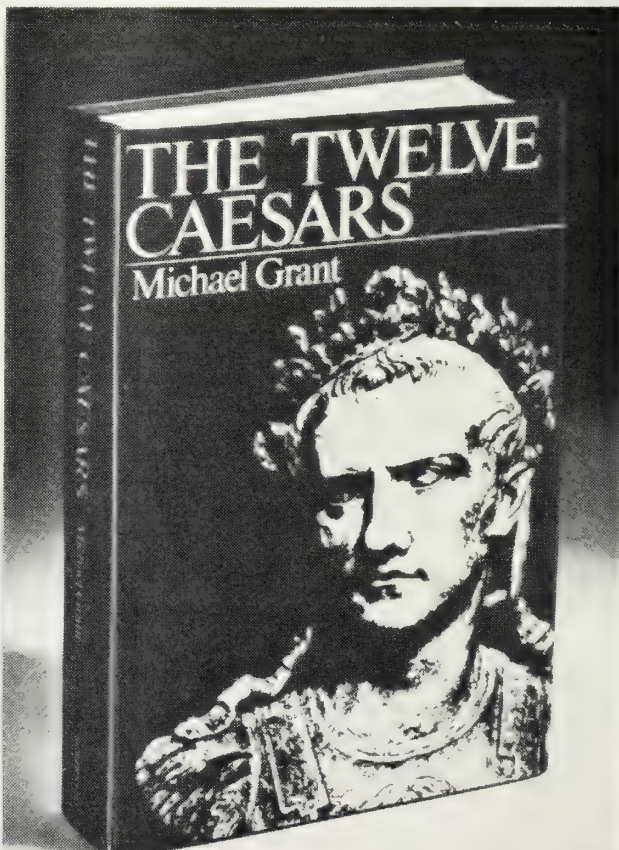
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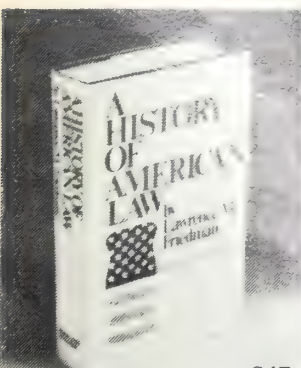
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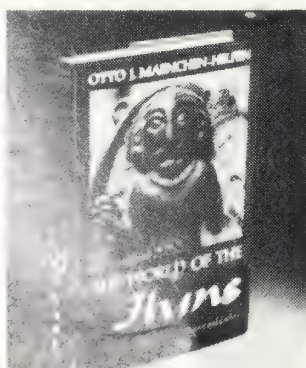
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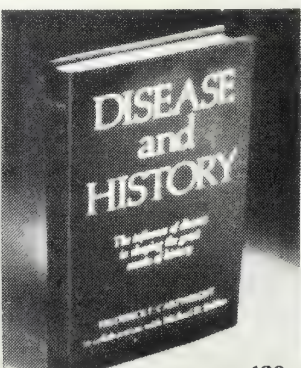
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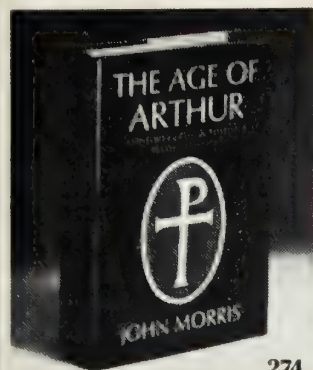


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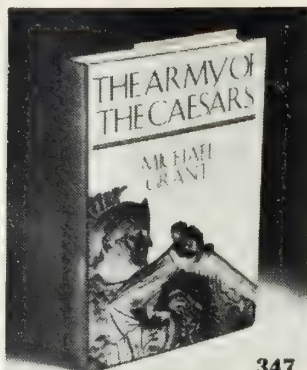


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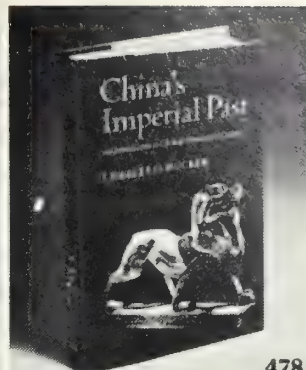
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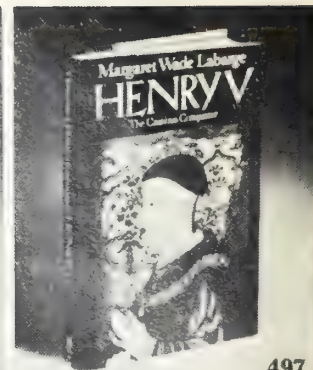
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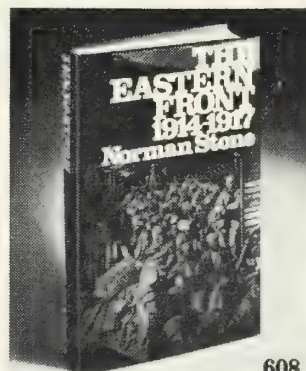
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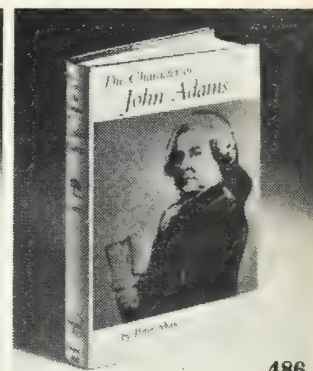
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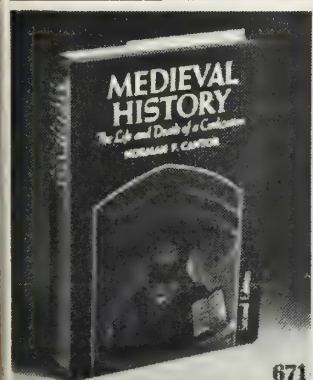
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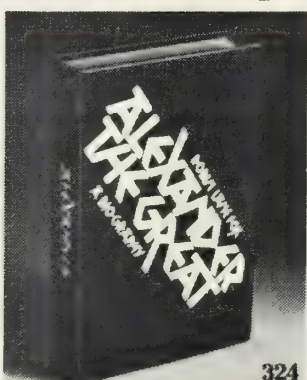
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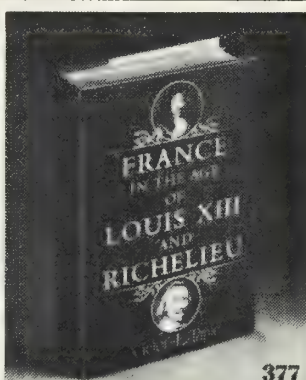
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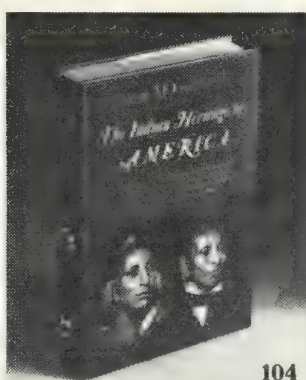
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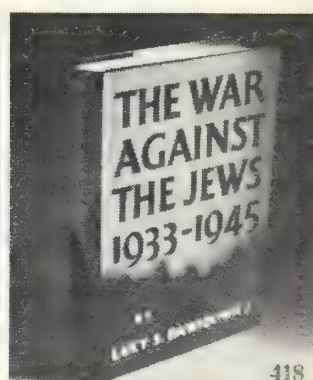
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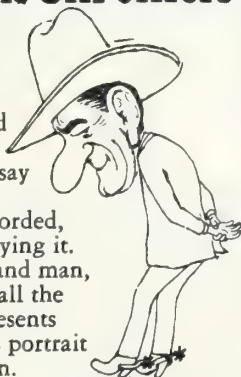


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### GOOD NEWS FOR THE BIG GUY

A particularly interesting case is presented by our work with Greelco-Pamet, the makers of Modern Mist hair spray. Modern Mist was the most successful budget-priced hair spray in the country and the source of great pride to Greelco-Pamet when a team of hypercritical government dermatologists reported that the product was responsible for 38 percent of all cases of premature balding in women.

Instead of embarking on a long, costly attempt to combat the government findings, Greelco-Pamet turned to the American Council on Plausibility. The council, after surveying the history of Modern Mist, found that Greelco-Pamet had never actually claimed that Modern Mist was meant to be applied to human hair. The Council began an aggressive campaign to *reposition* Modern Mist as a hair spray for dolls with the result that Modern Mist sales increased last year to an all-time high of \$133 million. The government case has been dropped.

3. *Total transformation services.* Where a product has been completely discredited, or where court action has already taken place, this, our most ambitious program, may be required. The Roloff-Rafferty Corporation has given us permission to mention here our success with their Twinkle Wax product. The Roloff-Rafferty firm is a small family-held New Jersey corporation dealing in lard. Shortly after World War II the company developed a method that enabled it to turn certain lard leavings into something very like floor wax. The resulting product, Twinkle Wax, held a respectable share of the floor wax market during the Fifties and early Sixties due to aggressive promotion and a substantial price advantage over competing products. Unfortunately for Roloff-Rafferty, Twinkle Wax was one of the first products to come under attack by vigilante "consumer advocates" in the late Sixties. Twinkle Wax was, indeed, vulnerable to attack, since it was a completely unreliable product which left a dull, sticky, lardlike residue. Government tests demonstrated that it contained no wax whatsoever, and the company was finally forced to abandon its brand name in favor of the more ambiguous Twinkle Shine. Roloff-Rafferty's plans to establish the Twinkle Shine brand were cut short when vin-

dictive "consumer advocates" succeeded in demonstrating that Twinkle Shine was incapable of producing so much as a dull glow on any floor. Unwilling to undertake a costly legal defense, and disheartened by the surly negative tone of the new "consumer" marketplace, Roloff-Rafferty killed off its Twinkle division. Faced with huge stockpiles of lard by-products, Roloff-Rafferty turned to the American Council on Plausibility.

After a brief and inexpensive investigation, a council field group determined that Roloff-Rafferty was well out of the oversaturated floorwax market. Investigators concluded that the lard by-products the Roloff-Rafferty group sought to market would be better presented "in some area where shine and durability are not important factors—perhaps in the personal-hygiene field."

Working from the field report, transformation experts at the council looked at several possibilities in the personal-hygiene field and finally determined that Twinkle Shine could be most effectively marketed as a denture adhesive. "The dull, gummy, sticky quality which worked against this product as a floor wax makes it a contender in the burgeoning denture adhesive field," the transformation report noted. The transformation report was then sent to the Naming Group, which sought to bring the new product 180 degrees away from the old nonplausible Twinkle Wax image. The resulting product—Oath Denture Adhesive—and its hard-hitting advertising campaign ("I eat anything I want—under Oath") received certification from the American Council on Plausibility as Completely Plausible. Last year, Oath Denture Adhesive captured a 26 percent market share, with sales of \$75 million. Moreover, the ambiguous nature of the claims made for Oath (Oath claims only to be sticky and never guarantees any lasting adhesion) and the fact that its principal slogan is without meaning of any kind, keeps Oath at a safe distance from consumer lawsuits.

Note: The American Council on Plausibility has itself been repositioned. The council has its origins in the Willett Morg Company, which manufactured, distributed, and falsely advertised various unappealing medical appliances in Los Angeles, California. □



# AMERICA'S UNSEEN REVOLUTION



Painful predictions from our most successful futurist

by John Fischer

**I**F PROPHETS WERE RATED like baseball players, Peter F. Drucker, with a lifetime batting average of about .420, would be the Ted Williams of the Seers' and Soothsayers' League. By contrast, the average futurist—whether stock-market analyst, racetrack tout, Kremlinologist, or political columnist—is lucky if he guesses right one time out of four.

Like Williams, Drucker makes it look easy. After reading one of his forecasts, and his reasons for it, one's response is likely to be "Why, that's obvious. Why didn't I think of it myself?" The odd thing is that practically nobody does think of it first. That is why hundreds of large corporations, here and abroad, have been eager to hire Drucker as a management consultant. (His fees start at \$1,500 a day, and he turns down far more clients than he accepts.) It also is why his thirteen books have sold more than 3 million copies, in twenty-nine languages.

For example, in a series of articles published in *Harper's Magazine* in 1955, and later as a book entitled *America's Next Twenty Years*, Drucker predicted accurately—and before anyone else—virtually all of the main economic and social issues that concern us today. He foresaw the worldwide pinch in food, oil, and other raw materials; the population

shifts that have changed the map of this continent; our emerging problems with the environment; the course of the civil-rights conflict; our sharp rise in medical costs; the development of new financial institutions; the threat of endless inflation; and half-a-dozen other questions that are making headlines today.

**D**RUCKER OF COURSE has a trick—or perhaps a unique talent. To use the baseball metaphor for the last time, he never swings at a doubtful pitch. He would never dream of making a prediction about the stock market, or the next election, or anything else in which the outcome may be decided by unforeseeable future events. Instead he relies on past events. His habit is to look at things that have already happened: how many children were born in 1925? how has the life expectancy curve changed in the past fifty years? how much common stock is owned by pension funds? These are known facts, available to any of us willing to pore through enough census tables and statistical indexes. But apparently only Drucker is willing to collect the thousands of facts relevant to his immediate purpose. He then arranges them into a pattern—usually a simple one.

*John Fischer is an associate editor of Harper's.*

Then, lo and behold, the pattern tells us something we did not know about the future or even the present.

So it is with his fourteenth book, *The Unseen Revolution: How Pension Fund Socialism Came to America* (Harper & Row, \$8.95). It weaves a pattern of facts that I still find hard to believe.

America, Drucker says, is the first and so far the only truly "socialist" state. According to the orthodox definition, socialism means "ownership of the means of production by the workers." Through their pension funds, employees now own at least 25 percent of the equity capital of American business—more than enough to ensure control. Self-employed people, teachers, and civil servants hold in their pension funds another 10 percent. Moreover, these holdings are largely concentrated in what Marxists call "the command positions" of our economy: the 1,000 biggest industrial firms, plus 100 tiny biggest in each of the 100 industrial groups, such as food, finance, retailing, communications, and transport. About all of importance that the pension funds do not control are farming, a few government-owned businesses such as the TVA, mutual insurance companies, the bankrupt railroads, and small family firms.

Furthermore, the share of the



economy owned by pension funds is increasing rather rapidly. Within the next decade it will come to about half of the stock of American corporations. Within twenty years, it will be something like two-thirds, plus some 40 percent of the debt capital.

When we speak of Big Business, then, we don't mean some bloated capitalist with dollar signs on his vest. We mean the teacher next door, Joe, down the street, who works in the foundry, the retired couple who moved to Florida last week. In sum, everybody who collects a pension now, or expects to someday. To paraphrase Pogo: "We have met Big Business, and he is us."

It follows that the workers, through their pension funds, already are harvesting the biggest share of the profits from American industry. Such funds collect about 35 percent of all dividends, which are then passed on to retired employees or held in reserve for those yet to retire. Another third of all corporate profit goes to the tax collectors—federal, state, and local—and much of that, too, is passed on to the workers through Social Security, Medicare, and other welfare programs. Less than a third of all profits is left to the traditional "independent investors" or what used to be called The Capitalists.

According to strict Marxist theory, therefore, the United States is far more socialized than such self-proclaimed socialist states as Sweden and India—not to mention China, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and the Eastern European countries. The latter practice a kind of state capitalism, rather than socialism, and their workers get a much smaller share of the national output than ours do.

**O**F COURSE, American workers don't realize that they own the controlling share in our economy—any more than I did before I read Drucker. Nor do they have any clue about what to do with their controlling interest. Certainly they are not about to take over management. They could, easily enough, if the pension fund of each large corporation were invested solely in that company's stock. But this will not happen, for two reasons. Such concentration

would tie the fortunes of the pensioners to a single firm; it is far safer, and more lucrative, to diversify the investment among many industries. Even more important, such strategy would place the union leaders in an impossible position. They would become the bosses, responsible for the profitable operation of the firm. At the same time, they would be representatives of the workers, who want ever-higher wages and fringe benefits. They would be bargaining against themselves in every wage negotiation—a plight that would drive any union president into schizophrenia, and his constituents into raging revolt.

So the workers remain absentee owners. Normally the management of their pension funds is entrusted to banks or other financial institutions. These, in turn, also shy away from management responsibilities. If they don't like the way a company is being run, they never try to change the management; they simply sell their stock in that firm and invest in another. Under pension-fund socialism, therefore, the management of most big companies has become, in effect, self-perpetuating and responsible to nobody. In moments of crisis, the minority of "independent" shareholders might try to overthrow management, or another big firm might attempt a take-over bid. But, aside from these exceptional circumstances, we are living with an anomalous situation: a "socialized" economy that is not answerable to society, nor to its worker-owners, nor even to the money managers who handle the pension investments. Obviously this raises the gravest questions about the legitimacy of management. It may be one of the reasons why so many corporate officers—free from day-to-day oversight—have been tempted recently into bribery and worse; and for the swelling public distrust of management in general.

Another problem of pension-fund socialism arises from the steady increase in the average age of the American population—the result of changes in birth and death rates since World War II. Already the center of political gravity has shifted to the elderly and near-elderly: that is, people who are now drawing pensions, plus those who expect to within ten or fifteen years. Their pension rights are the first claim on

the nation's productivity, and they have the political numbers to see that these claims are enforced.

This economic burden is far heavier than John Kenneth Galbraith ever suspected when he predicted thirty years ago that we were about to enter the paradise of The Affluent Society. In fact, alas, the country is going to become less affluent, as the load of the pensioners grows. Today every three people at work are supporting one in retirement. Within a decade that ratio will shrink to two-and-a-half to one. It is simply not possible for the economy to carry that kind of burden, and to support at the same time all the other desirable things that once seemed within reach.

Drucker anticipates, therefore, painful cutbacks in almost everything except pension costs, public and private. Less money will be available to help blacks and other disadvantaged minorities. Our overblown educational establishment, particularly the universities, will have to shrink. Housing, hospitals, highways, and scores of other laudable programs will go unfunded or much reduced. Because capital will remain chronically scarce, future growth of the economy will have to be directed much more carefully, both in scale and in its goals. Our politicians will worry more about inflation and less about unemployment—because their most powerful constituents, the elderly, see inflation as the worst menace.

These changes will bring new and dangerous political stresses: the younger workers against the older, the pensioners against the unemployed, every vested interest against all others as they struggle to keep their places at a dwindling public trough.

Only by implication does Drucker raise the most interesting question of all. Will democracy work in the kind of future he foresees? As long as the economic pie keeps growing, democracy is fairly easy. Pressure groups can always compromise so long as they get a slightly larger piece of pie each year. But what happens when the pie starts shrinking, as it now evidently is? Will the resulting strains and acrimonies be too much for the social fabric to bear? In the next ten years we may get some inkling of an answer. □



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# THE INTELLIGENT CO-ED'S GUIDE TO AMERICA

by Tom Wolfe

What could be better than the worst of all possible worlds?

**O**MOTHER O'HARE, big bosom for our hungry poets, pelvic saddle for our sexologists and Open Classroom theorists—O houri O'Hare, who keeps her Perm-O-Pour Stoneglow thighs ajar to receive a generation of frustrated and unreadable novelists—

But wait a minute. It may be too early for the odes. Has it even been duly noted that O'Hare, which is an airport outside Chicago, is now the intellectual center of the United States?

Curious, but true. There at O'Hare, on any day, Monday through Friday, from September to June, they sit . . . in row after Mies van der row of black vinyl and stainless-steel sling chairs . . . amid soaring walls of plate glass . . . from one-tenth to one-third of the literary notables of the United States. In October and April, the peak months, the figure goes up to one-half.

Masters and Johnson and Erica Jong, Kozol and Rifkin and Hacker and Kael, Steinem and Nader, Marks, Hayden and Mailer, Galbraith and Heilbroner, and your bear-market brothers in the PopEco business, Lekachman & Others—which of you has not hunkered down lately in the prodigious lap of Mother O'Hare!

And if so, why? Because writers head out into the land to give lectures. They are giving

lectures at the colleges and universities of America's heartland, which runs from Fort Lee, New Jersey, on the east to the Hollywood Freeway on the west. Giving lectures in the heartland is one of the lucrative dividends of being a noted writer in America. It is the writer's faint approximation of, say, Joe Cocker's \$25,000 one-night stand at the West Springfield Fair. All the skyways to Lectureland lead through O'Hare Airport. In short, up to one-half of our intellectual establishment sits outside of Chicago between planes.

At a literary conference at Notre Dame, I (no stranger to bountiful O'Hare myself) ran into a poet who is noted for his verse celebrating the ecology, née Nature. He lives in a dramatic house nailed together completely from uncut pieces of hickory driftwood, perched on a bluff overlooking the crashing ocean, a spot so remote that you can drive no closer than five miles to it by conventional automobile and barely within a mile-and-a-half by Jeep. The last 7,500 feet it's hand over hand up rocks, vines, and lengths of hemp. I remarked that this must be the ideal setting in which to write about the ecological wonders.

"I wouldn't know," he said. "I do all my writing in O'Hare."

And what is the message that the bards



George Gardner

*Tom Wolfe is the author of Mauve Gloves & Madmen, Clutter & Vine, which will be published in the fall.*



and sages of O'Hare bring to millions of college students in the vast fodderlands of the nation? I'm afraid I must report that it is a gloomy message; morose, even, heading for gangrene.

### The Frisbee ion

**I**F YOU HAPPEN TO attend a conference at which whole contingents of the O'Hare philosophers assemble, you can get the message in all its varieties in a short time. Picture, if you will, a university on the Great Plains . . . a new Student Activities Center the color of butter-almond ice cream . . . a huge interior space with tracks in the floor, along which janitors in green twill pull Expando-Flex accordion walls to create meeting rooms of any size. The conference is about to begin. The students come surging in like hormones. You've heard of rosy cheeks? They *have* them! Here they come, rosy-cheeked, laughing, with Shasta and 7-Up pumping through their veins, talking chipsey, flashing weatherproof smiles, bursting out of their down-filled Squaw Valley jackets and their blue jeans—O immortal denim mons veneris!—looking, all of them, boys and girls, Jocks & Buds & Freaks, as if they spent the day hang-gliding and then made a Miller commercial at dusk and are now going to taper off with a little Culture before returning to the co-ed dorm. They grow quiet. The conference begins. The keynote speaker, a historian wearing a calfskin jacket and hair like Felix Mendelssohn's, informs them that the United States is "a leaden, life-denying society."

Over the next thirty-six hours, other O'Hare regulars fill in the rest:

Sixty families control one-half the private wealth of America, and 200 corporations own two-thirds of the means of production. "A small group of nameless, faceless men" who avoid publicity the way a werewolf avoids the dawn now dominates American life. In America a man's home is not his castle but merely "a gigantic listening device with a mortgage"—a reference to eavesdropping by the FBI and the CIA. America's foreign policy has been and continues to be based upon war, assassination, bribery, genocide, and the sabotage of democratic governments. "The new McCarthyism" (Joe's, not Gene's) is already upon us. Following a brief charade of free speech, the "gagging of the press" has resumed. Racism in America has not diminished; it is merely more subtle now. The gulf between rich and poor widens daily, creating "permanent ghetto-colonial populations." The

decline in economic growth is causing a crisis in capitalism, which will lead shortly to authoritarian rule and to a new America in which everyone waits, in horror, for the knock on the door in the dead of the night, the descent of the knout on the nape of the neck—

**H**OW OTHER PEOPLE attending this conference felt by now, I didn't dare ask. As for myself, I was beginning to feel like Job or Miss Cunégonde. What further devastations or humiliations could possibly be in store, short of the sacking of Kansas City? It was in that frame of mind that I attended the final panel discussion, which was entitled "The United States in the Year 2000."

The prognosis was not good, as you can imagine. But I was totally unprepared for the astounding news brought by an ecologist.

"I'm not sure I want to be alive in the year 2000," he said, although he certainly looked lively enough at the moment. He was about thirty-eight, and he wore a Madras plaid cotton jacket and a Disco Magenta turtleneck jersey.

It seemed that recent studies showed that, due to the rape of the atmosphere by aerosol spray users, by 2000 a certain ion would no longer be coming our way from the sun. I can't remember which one . . . the aluminum ion, the magnesium ion, the neon ion, the gadolinium ion, the calcium ion . . . the calcium ion perhaps; in any event, it was crucial for the formation of bones, and by 2000 it would be no more. Could such a thing be? Somehow this went beyond any of the horrors I was already imagining. I began free-associating. . . . Suddenly I could see Lexington Avenue, near where I live in Manhattan. The presence of the storm troopers was the least of it. It was the look of ordinary citizens that was so horrible. Their bones were going. They were dissolving. Women who had once been clicking and clogging down the Avenue up on five-inch platform soles, with their pants seams smartly cleaving their declivities, were now mere denim & patent-leather blobs . . . oozing and inching and suppurating along the sidewalk like amoebas or ticks. . . . A cabdriver puts his arm out the window . . . and it just dribbles down the yellow door like hot Mazola. . . . A blind news dealer tries to give change to a notions buyer for Bloomingdale's, and their fingers run together like fettucine over a stack of *New York Posts*. . . . It's horrible . . . it's obscene . . . it's the end—

I was so dazed, I was no longer wondering what the assembled students thought of all



it must be true—and yet life keeps getting easier, sunnier, happier . . . *Frisbee!*  
How can such things be?

it must be true—and yet life keeps getting easier, sunnier, happier . . . *Frisbee!*

How can such things be?

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S-S-S-S-S-S-SSSSSSSS

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**O**NE SATURDAY NIGHT in 1965 I found myself on a stage at Princeton University with Günter Grass, Allen Ginsberg, Paul Krassner, and an avant-garde filmmaker named Gregory Markopoulos. We were supposed to talk about “the

“What is the message that the bards and sages of O’Hare bring to millions of college students? I’m afraid it is a gloomy message; morose, even, heading for gangrene.”

S-s-s-s-s-s-s-sssssssss

**O**NE SATURDAY NIGHT in 1965 I found myself on a stage at Princeton University with Günter Grass, Allen Ginsberg, Paul Krassner, and an avant-garde filmmaker named Gregory Markopoulos. We were supposed to talk about "the style of the Sixties." The auditorium had a big balcony and a lot of moldings. It reminded me of the National Opera House in San José, Costa Rica. The place was packed with about twelve hundred Princeton students and their dates. Before things got started, it was hard to figure out just what they expected. Somebody up in the balcony kept making a sound like a baby crying. Somebody in the main floor always responded with a strange sound he was able to make with his mouth and his cupped hands. It sounded like a raccoon trapped in a garbage can. The baby... the raccoon in a can.... Every time they did it the whole place cracked up, 1,200 Princeton students and their dates. "Dates"... yes... this was back before the era of "Our eyes met, our lips met, our bodies met, and then we were introduced."

A black and white photograph of George Gardner lying on his back in a field of tall grass. He is wearing a light-colored short-sleeved shirt and dark trousers, with his arms raised above his head. A sign is placed on the ground to his left, reading "end hunger in America."

George Gardner

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Anyway, the format was that each man on the stage would make an opening statement about the 1960s, and then the panel discussion would begin. Günter Grass, as Germany's new giant of the novel, the new Thomas Mann, went first. He understood English but didn't feel confident speaking in English, and so he made his statement in German. I doubt that there were ten people in the place who knew what he was saying, but he seemed to speak with gravity and passion. When he finished, there was tremendous applause. Then an interpreter named Albert Harrison (as I recall) delivered Mr. Grass's remarks in English. Sure enough, they were grave and passionate. They were about the responsibility of the artist in a time of struggle and crisis. The applause was even greater than before. Some of the students rose to their feet. Some of the dates rose, too.

The moderator was Paul Krassner, editor of *The Realist* magazine. I remember looking over at Krassner. He looked like one of the trolls that lives under the bridge in Norse tales and sits there stroking its molting nose and waiting for hotshots to swagger over the span. Krassner had to wait for about two minutes for the applause to die down enough to make himself heard. Then he leaned into his microphone and said quite solemnly:

"Thank you, Günter Grass. And thank you, Albert Harrison, for translating . . . Mr. Grass's bar mitzvah speech."

*Stunned*—like 1,200 veal calves entering the abattoir. Then came the hissing. Twelve hundred Princeton students & dates started hissing. I had never heard such a sound before . . . an entire hall consumed in hisses . . .

"S-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-ssssss!"

You couldn't hear yourself talk. You could only hear that sibilant storm. Krassner just sat there with his manic troll look on, waiting for it to die down. It seemed to take forever. When the storm began to subside a bit, he leaned into the microphone again and said:

"For two years I've been hearing that God is dead. I'm very much relieved to see he only sprung a leak."

For some reason that stopped the hissing. The kid up in the balcony made a sound like a baby crying. The kid on the main floor made a sound like a raccoon in a garbage can. The crowd laughed and booed, and people tried out new noises. The gyroscope was now gone from the control panel. . . . Our trajectory was end over end. . . .

The next thing I knew the discussion was onto the subject of fascism in America. Everybody was talking about police repression and the anxiety and paranoia as good folks waited for the knock on the door and the

descent of the knout on the nape of the neck. I couldn't make any sense out of it. I had just made a tour of the country to write a series called "The New Life Out There" for *New York* magazine. This was the mid-1960s. The post-World War II boom had by now pumped money into every level of the population on a scale unparalleled in any nation in history. Not only that, the folks were running wilder and freer than any people in history. For that matter, Krassner himself, in one of the strokes of exuberance for which he was well known, was soon to publish a slight hoax: an account of how Lyndon Johnson was so overjoyed about becoming President that he had a necrophiliac bout with John F. Kennedy on Air Force One as Kennedy's body was being flown back from Dallas. Krassner presented this as a suppressed chapter from William Manchester's book, *Death of a President*. Johnson, of course, was still President when it came out. Yet the merciless gestapo dragnet missed Krassner, who cleverly hid out onstage at Princeton on Saturday nights.

Suddenly I heard myself blurting out over my microphone: "My God, what are you talking about? We're in the middle of a . . . Happiness Explosion!"

That merely sounded idiotic. The kid up in the balcony did the crying baby. The kid down below did the raccoon... *Krakatoa, East of Java*... I disappeared in a tidal wave of rude sounds... Back to the goon squads, search-and-seize and roust-a-daddy...

Support came from a quarter I hadn't counted on. It was Grass, speaking in English.

"For the past hour I have my eyes fixed on the doors here," he said. "You talk about fascism and police repression. In Germany when I was a student, they come through those doors long ago. Here they must be very slow."

Grass was enjoying himself for the first time all evening. He was not simply saying, "You really don't have so much to worry about." He was indulging his sense of the absurd. He was saying: "You American intellectuals—you want so desperately to feel besieged and persecuted!"

He sounded like Jean-François Revel, a French socialist writer who talks about one of the great unexplained phenomena of modern astronomy: namely, that the dark night of fascism is always descending in the United States and yet lands only in Europe.

Not very nice, Günter! Not very nice, Jean-François! A bit supercilious, wouldn't you say!

In fact, during the 1960s American intellectuals seldom seemed to realize just how patronizing their European brethren were be-



# Sometimes Profits Can Hurt...



You might say Janie is getting an injection of taxes...and it hurts. Her father is dead and her mother works to support Janie and an older brother. They can't afford a private pediatrician, so she's being immunized against childhood diseases in a clinic run by the neighborhood hospital.

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ing. To the Europeans, American intellectuals were struggling so hard (yet once again) to be correct in ideology and in attitude . . . and they were *being* correct . . . impeccable, even—which was precisely what prompted the sniggers and the knowing looks. European intellectuals looked upon American intellectuals much the way English colonial officials used to look upon the swarthy locals who came forward with their Calcutta Toff Oxford accents or their Lagos Mayfair tailored clothes. It was so touching (*then why are you laughing?*) to see the natives try to *do it right*.

I happened to have been in a room in Washington in 1961 when a member of Nigeria's first Cabinet (after Independence) went into a long lament about the insidious and seductive techniques the British had used over the years to domesticate his people.

"Just look at *me!*" he said, looking down at his own torso and flipping his hands toward his chest. "Look at this *suit!* A worsted suit on an African—and a *double-breasted waistcoat!*"

He said "double-breasted waistcoat" with the most shriveling self-contempt you can imagine.

"This is what they've done to me," he said softly. "I can't even do the High Life anymore."

The High Life, was a Low-Rent Nigerian dance. He continued to stare down at the offending waistcoat, wondering where he'd left his soul, or his Soul, in any event.

Perhaps someday, if Mr. Bob Silvers's *Confessions* are published, we will read something similar. Silvers is co-editor of *The New York Review of Books*. His accent arrived mysteriously one day in a box from London. Intrigued, he slapped it into his mouth like a set of teeth. It seemed . . . *right*. He began signing up so many English dons to write for *The New York Review of Books* that wags began calling it *The London Review of Bores* and *Don & Grub Street*. He seemed to take this good-naturedly. But perhaps someday we will learn that Mr. Bob Silvers, too, suffered blue moods of the soul and stood in front of a mirror wiggling his knees, trying to jiggle his roots, wondering if his feet could ever re-negotiate the Lindy or the Fish or the Hokey-Pokey.

### Hell's angels



HOW FAITHFULLY our native intelligentsia has tried to . . . *do it right!* The model has not always been England. Not at all. Just as frequently it has been Germany or France or Italy or

even (on the religious fringe) the Orient. In the old days—seventy-five-or-so years ago—the well-brought-up young intellectual was likely to be treated to a tour of Europe . . . we find Jane Addams recuperating from her malaise in London and Dresden . . . Lincoln Steffens going to college in Heidelberg and Munich . . . Mabel Dodge setting up house in Florence . . . Randolph Bourne discovering Germany's "charming villages" and returning to Bloomfield, New Jersey—*Bloomfield, New Jersey?*—which now "seemed almost too grotesquely squalid and frowsy to be true." The business of being an intellectual and the urge to set oneself apart from provincial life began to be indistinguishable. In July 1921 Harold Stearns completed his anthology called *Civilization in the United States*—a contradiction in terms, he hastened to note—and set sail for Europe. The "Lost Generation" adventure began. But what was the Lost Generation really? It was a post-Great War discount tour in which middle-class Americans, too, not just Bournes and Steffenses, could learn how to become European intellectuals; preferably French.

The European intellectual! What a marvelous figure! A brilliant cynic, dazzling, in fact, set like one of those Gustave Miklos Art Deco sculptures of polished bronze and gold against the smoking rubble of Europe after the Great War. The American intellectual did the best he could. He could position himself against a backdrop of . . . well, not exactly rubble . . . but of the booboisie, the Herd State, the United States of Puritanism, Philistinism, Boosterism, Greed, and the great Hog Wallow. It was certainly a *psychological* wasteland. For the next fifty years, from that time to this, with ever-increasing skill, the American intellectual would perform this difficult feat, which might be described as the Adjectival Catch Up. The European intellectuals have a real wasteland? Well, we have a psychological wasteland. They have real fascism? Well, we have social fascism (a favorite phrase of the 1930s, amended to "liberal fascism" in the 1960s). They have real poverty? Well, we have relative poverty (Michael Harrington's great Adjectival Catch Up of 1963). They have real genocide? Well, we have cultural genocide (i.e., what universities were guilty of in the late 1960s if they didn't have open-admissions policies for minority groups).

Well—all right! They were difficult, these one-and-a-half gainers in logic. But they were worth it. What had become important above all was to be that polished figure amid the rubble, a vision of sweetness and light in the smoking tar pit of Hell. The intellectual had become not so much an occupational type as a



status type. He was like the Medieval cleric, most of whose energies were devoted to separating himself from the mob—which in modern times, in Revel's phrase, goes under the name of the middle class.

Did he want to analyze the world systematically? Did he want to add to the store of human knowledge? He not only didn't want to, he belittled the notion, quoting Rosa Luxemburg's statement that the "pot-bellied academics" and their interminable monographs and lectures, their intellectual nerve gas, were sophisticated extensions of police repression. Did he even want to change the world? Not particularly; it was much more elegant to back exotic, impossible causes such as the Black Panthers'. Moral indignation was the main thing; that, and a certain pattern of consumption. In fact, by the 1960s it was no longer necessary to produce literature, scholarship, or art—or even to be involved in such matters, except as a consumer—in order to qualify as an intellectual. It was only necessary to live *la vie intellectuelle*. A little brown bread in the bread box, a lapsed pledge card to CORE, a stereo and a record rack full of Coltrane and all the Beatles albums from *Revolver* on, white walls, a huge *Dracaena marginata* plant, which is there because all the furniture is so clean-lined and spare that without this piece of frondose tropical Victoriana the room looks empty, a stack of unread *New York Review of Books* rising up in a surly mound of subscription guilt, the conviction that America is materialistic, repressive, bloated, and deadened by its Silent Majority, which resides in the heartland, three grocery boxes full of pop bottles wedged in behind the refrigerator and destined (one of these days) for the Recycling Center, a small, uncomfortable European car—that pretty well got the job done.

**B**Y THE LATE 1960s it seemed as if American intellectuals had at last . . . Caught Up. There were riots on the campuses and in the slums. The war in Vietnam had developed into a full-sized Hell. War! Revolution! Imperialism! Poverty! I can still remember the ghastly delight with which literary people in New York embraced the Four Horsemen. The dark night was about to descend. All agreed on that; but there were certain ugly, troublesome facts that the native intellectuals, unlike their European mentors, had a hard time ignoring.

By 1967 Lyndon Johnson may have been the very generalissimo of American imperialism in Southeast Asia—but back here in the

U.S. the citizens were enjoying freedom of expression and freedom of dissent to a rather astonishing degree. For example, the only major Western country that allowed public showings of *MacBird*—a play that had Lyndon Johnson murdering John F. Kennedy in order to become President—was the United States (Lyndon Johnson, President). The citizens of this fascist bastion, the United States, unaccountably had, and exercised, the most extraordinary political freedom and civil rights in all history. In fact, the government, under the same Johnson, had begun the novel experiment of sending organizers into the slums—in the Community Action phase of the poverty program—to mobilize minority groups to rise up against the government and demand a bigger slice of the pie. (They obliged.) Colored peoples were much farther along the road to equality—whether in the area of rights, jobs, income, or social acceptance—in the United States than were the North Africans, Portuguese, Senegalese, Pakistani, and Jamaicans of Europe. In 1966 England congratulated herself over the appointment of her first colored policeman (a Pakistani in Coventry). Meanwhile, young people in the U.S.—in the form of the Psychedelic or Flower Generation—were helping themselves to wild times that were the envy of children all over the world.

In short, freedom was in the air like a flock of birds. Just how fascist could it be? This problem led to perhaps the greatest Adjectival Catch Up of all times: Herbert Marcuse's doctrine of "repressive tolerance." Other countries had real repression? Well, we had the obverse, repressive tolerance. This was an insidious system through which the government granted meaningless personal freedoms in order to narcotize the pain of class repression, which only socialism could cure. Beautiful! Well-nigh flawless!

Yet even at the moment of such exquisite refinements—things have a way of going wrong. Another troublesome fact has cropped up, gravely complicating the longtime dream of socialism. That troublesome fact may be best summed up in a name: Solzhenitsyn.

### Blaming the messenger

**W**ITH THE HUNGARIAN UPRISING of 1956 and the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 it had become clear to Mannerist Marxists such as Sartre that the Soviet Union was now an embarrassment. The fault, however, as *tout le monde* knew, was not with socialism

**"By the 1960s it was no longer necessary to produce literature, scholarship, or art—or even to be involved in such matters, except as a consumer—in order to qualify as an intellectual."**





but with Stalinism. Stalin was a madman and had taken socialism on a wrong turn. (Mistakes happen.) Solzhenitsyn began speaking out as a dissident inside the Soviet Union in 1967. His complaints, his revelations, his struggles with Soviet authorities—they merely underscored just how wrong the Stalinist turn had been.

The publication of *The Gulag Archipelago* in 1973, however, was a wholly unexpected blow. No one was ready for the obscene horror and grotesque scale of what Solzhenitsyn called "Our Sewage Disposal System"—in which *tens of millions* were shipped in boxcars to concentration camps all over the country, in which tens of millions died, in which entire races and national groups were liquidated, insofar as they had existed in the Soviet Union. Moreover, said Solzhenitsyn, the system had not begun with Stalin but with Lenin, who had immediately exterminated non-Bolshevik opponents of the old regime and especially the student factions. It was impossible any longer to distinguish the Communist liquidation apparatus from the Nazi.

Yet Solzhenitsyn went still further. He said that not only Stalinism, not only Leninism, not only Communism—but socialism itself led to the concentration camps; and not only socialism, but Marxism; and not only Marxism but any ideology that sought to reorganize morality on an *a priori* basis. Sadder still, it was impossible to say that Soviet socialism was not "real socialism." On the contrary—it was socialism done by experts!

Intellectuals in Europe and America were willing to forgive Solzhenitsyn a great deal. After all, he had been born and raised in the Soviet Union as a Marxist, he had fought in combat for his country, he was a great novelist, he had been in the camps for eight years, he had suffered. But for his insistence that the *isms* themselves led to the death camps—for this he was not likely to be forgiven soon. And in fact the campaign of antisepsis began soon after he was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1974. ("He suffered *too* much—he's crazy." "He's a Christian zealot with a Christ complex." "He's an agrarian reactionary." "He's an egotist and a publicity junkie.")

Solzhenitsyn's tour of the United States last year was like an enormous funeral procession that no one wanted to see. The White House wanted no part of him. The *New York Times* sought to bury his two major speeches, and under the moral pressure of a lone *Times* writer, William Bradford Huie, brought them any appreciable coverage at all. The major television networks declined to run the Solzhenitsyn interview that created such a stir in England earlier this

year (it ran on some of the educational channels).

And the literary world in general ignored him completely. In the huge unseen coffin that Solzhenitsyn towed behind him were not only the souls of the *zeks* who died in the Archipelago. No, the heartless bastard had also chucked in one of the last great visions: the intellectual as the Stainless Steel Socialist glistening against the bone heap of capitalism in its final, brutal, fascist phase. There was a bone heap, all right, and it was grisly beyond belief, but socialism had created it.

**I**N 1974, IN ONE OF HIS last speeches, the late Lionel Trilling, who was probably the most prestigious literary critic in the country and had been a professor of English at Columbia for thirty-five years, made what falls under the heading of "a modest proposal." He suggested that the liberal-arts curriculum in the universities be abandoned for one generation.

His argument ran as follows. Children come to the university today, and they register, and they get the student activity card and the map of the campus and the university health booklet, and just about as automatically they get a packet of cultural and political attitudes. That these attitudes are negative or cynical didn't seem to be what worried Trilling. It was more that they are dispensed and accepted with such an air of conformity and inevitability. The student emerges from the university with a set of ready-mades, intact, untouched by direct experience. What was the solution? Well—why not turn off the packaging apparatus for a while? In time there might develop a generation of intelligent people who had experienced American life directly and "earned" their opinions.

Whether his proposal was serious or not, I couldn't say. But somehow he made me think once more of the Lost Lad of the Great Plains, the Candide in Reverse,

Who asked how old you had to be  
Before the O'Hare curse  
Coldcocked you like the freight train  
Of history—  
Tell me, are you willing,  
Lost Lad, to pick yourself some  
Intelligent lost co-ed Cunégonde  
And head out shank-to-flank in Trilling's  
Curriculum?  
Will you hector *tout le monde*?  
Will you sermonize  
On how perceiving  
Is believing  
The heresy of your own eyes? □



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*The Presidential campaign of 1876—  
a procession of Democrats on Fifth Avenue in New York*



# THE PRESIDENTS WE DESERVE

by Elmer Davis

NOVEMBER 1924

**W**Henever somebody more than usually atrocious is elected to high public office, we serious thinkers are apt to console ourselves with the reflection that under a democratic system a people gets the government it deserves. It is time to get rid of this facile optimism. In a few days some twenty-five or fifty million of us will go to the polls and express our choice between Mr. Coolidge, Mr. Davis, and Mr. La Follette. It is not the contention of this article that any one of these three gentlemen is a superman. None of them incites comparison with Washington, Napoleon, or St. Augustine. Nevertheless, whichever one of the three is elected will be a better President than the American people deserve, or would have acquired by their own efforts. In fact, of the seven Presidents of the past generation not more than one or two have been as bad as we deserved.

*Voluntas populi suprema lex.* The will of the people in public affairs is generally to let somebody else do it. If George does it I retain the privilege of criticism and can complain bitterly about the mess George has made of it, but if I do it I shall not only have to postpone the cultivation of my own interests and devote valuable time and attention to the public welfare, but shall be deprived of my sacred right to abuse the conduct of the government. The electoral-college provision of the constitution doubtless has its origin in distrust of the popular intelligence, but it could have been supported far more soundly by the argument of public indifference. The

electoral college amounts to nothing because of the unexpected rise of the party system, but there is substantially an operating electoral-college system in the nominating conventions which pick the candidates among whom the voters must choose.

The chief difference lies in the fact that our nominating colleges, instead of being composed of the wisest citizens, as the Founding Fathers expected, are composed mainly of those who want the job badly enough to work for it and to spend their own money on railroad fare and hotel bills. This might have been foreseen by the Constitutional Convention if its members had gone behind the returns in the history of past republics, and had given less attention to the machinery of government and more to how it was worked. Every form of government in every country has been run by the people who wanted to govern, who wanted it badly enough to spend all their efforts toward that end. Anybody who cares enough about politics to give it the greater part of his attention can achieve a considerable participation in the business of government, even if he attains only a nuisance value. The once prevalent doctrine that practical politics requires a certain astuteness can hardly survive a contemplation of the men who are at present engaged in practical politics in the United States. The average politician is even more incompetent than the average golfer, but he has the advantage of practicing an art in which the factor of luck is considerably larger, and he has a better alibi for his score.

It can hardly be denied that in the United States today there are twenty first-rate minds in the profession of engineering, say, for every one in the profession of politics. Henry Cabot Lodge is considerably more astute than the average politician; and, in his own autobiography,

## AN OPEN LETTER TO MY COUNTRYMEN

I have pretty much made up my mind to run for President. What the country wants is a candidate who cannot be injured by investigation of his past history so that the enemies of the party will be unable to rake up anything against him that nobody ever heard of before. If you know the worst about a candidate to begin with, every attempt to spring things on him will be checkmated. Now I am going to enter the field with an open record. I am going to own up in advance to all the wickedness I have done, and if any Congressional committee is disposed to prowl around my biography in the hope of discovering any dark and deadly deed that I have secreted, why—let it prowl.

In the first place, I admit that I treed a rheumatic grandfather of

mine in the winter of 1850. He was old and inexperienced in climbing trees, but with the heartless brutality that is characteristic of me I ran him out of the front door in his nightshirt at the point of a shotgun and caused him to bowl up a maple tree, where he remained all night, while I emptied shot into his legs. I did this because he snored. I will do it again if ever I have another grandfather. I am as inhuman now as I was in 1850.

I candidly acknowledge that I ran away at the battle of Gettysburg. My friends have tried to smooth over this fact by asserting that I did so for the purpose of imitating Washington, who went into the woods at Valley Forge for the purpose of saying his prayers. It was a miserable subterfuge. I struck out

in a straight line for the Tropic of Cancer because I was scared. I wanted my country saved, but I preferred to have somebody else save it. I entertain that preference yet. If the bubble reputation can be obtained only at the cannon's mouth, I am willing to go there for it, provided the cannon is empty. If it is loaded, my immortal and inflexible purpose is to get over the fence and go home.

My invariable practice in war has been to bring out of every fight two-thirds more men than when I went in. This seems to me to be Napoleonic in its grandeur.

My financial views are of the most decided character, but they are not likely, perhaps, to increase my popularity with the advocates of inflation. I do not insist upon the spe-



with admirable frankness he has preserved Henry Adams's approval of young Lodge's intention of entering the profession of literature, which, said Adams, offered more opportunity than almost any other to a man of moderate attainments. But it didn't take Lodge long to discover that politics, even more than letters, was the happy hunting ground of mediocrity which in that field would stand out like genius itself.

It was not always so, of course. The reasons for the decline in the average, if not the modal, intelligence of our public men have been much debated, and not very conclusively. The fact, however, is obvious to anybody who knows any large number of politicians or who even reads much about them. The great intelligent electorate leaves the selection of its rulers to men who are interested in politics, and politics has generally ceased to interest first-rate men. The direct primary has only confirmed the restriction of public life to men who are willing to spend their own time and their own money in seeking office, for themselves or others. It gives us all a chance to take part in the selection of our rulers, and in nine primaries out of ten nobody votes except people whose direct and immediate personal interests are connected not only with voting but with being seen voting right.

*Ex nihilo nihil fit.* The general run of the men who manage the parties and select the candidates being inferior, their ideas are inferior, and they naturally incline to prefer inferiority in others because that is all they can understand. And here is the genesis of that synthetic monster which overshadows American politics—the Available Man. Availability as the average politician understands it is a purely negative thing because the average politician is so nearly negative. The Available Can-

didate is one who has no enemies, against whom nothing can be said, to whom nothing need be forgiven because he has done nothing. The idea of nominating a man to whom much may be forgiven because he hath done much is incomprehensible to politicians whose own characters are so feeble, whose own records of achievement are so blank that they have nothing positive to offset anything which might be charged against them. You don't get grapes from thorns, figs from thistles, or great nominees from petty nominators.

No doubt this is very deplorable, but the unpolitical citizen who fumes about it ought to search his own heart and recall if, at the last election, he didn't vote for A because his opponent X was a Catholic (or not a Catholic, as the case may be); if he didn't prefer the negative Y to the capable B because B held unorthodox views on the liquor question; and if he didn't allow C's outspoken views in favor of (or against) the League of Nations to drive him into voting for Z, who never had views, or if he did never spoke them out, on any subject. We often have luck with our candidates, due to the operation of blind chance or an all-wise Providence, but we do get the party organizations and the nominating conventions we deserve.

**H**ENCE THE AVAILABLE MAN. Availability, of course, as it is understood in American politics, means availability during the campaign only. It means a good candidate, not a good official. In the searchings of heart, the intriguing combinations, and the bitter quarrels that make up the operation of a truly unbossed nominating convention, about seventy-five per cent of the mental effort exerted goes to the seeking of a man

cial supremacy of rag money or hard money. The great fundamental principle of my life is to take any kind I can get.

The rumor that I buried a dead aunt under my grapevine was correct. The vine needed fertilizing, my aunt had to be buried, and I dedicated her to this high purpose. Does that unfit me for the Presidency?

The Constitution of our country does not say so. No other citizen was ever considered unworthy of this office because he enriched his grapevines with his dead relatives. Why should I be selected as the first victim of an absurd prejudice?

I admit, also, that I am not a friend of the poor man. I regard the poor man, in his present condition, as so much wasted raw material.

Cut up and properly canned, he might be made useful to fatten the natives of the Cannibal Islands and to improve our export trade with that region. I shall recommend legislation upon the subject in my first message. My campaign cry will be: "Desiccate the poor workingman; stuff him into sausage."

These are about the worst parts of my record. On them I come before the country. If my country don't want me, I will go back again. But I recommend myself as a safe man—a man who starts from the basis of total depravity and proposes to be fiendish to the last.

—Mark Twain  
"Let's Look at the Record"  
July 1954  
Reprinted from the  
Kansas City Journal, June 15, 1879

The Granger Collection



Grover Cleveland, from an 1888 lithograph



who can get the requisite majority in the convention, about twenty-three per cent to the chances of the various aspirants for getting a majority in the electoral college, and not more than two per cent at the outside to the aspirants' respective qualification for the presidency.

You would think that it would be plain enough for the understanding of even the average politician that a man who can successfully discharge the duties of the presidency is apt to be re-elected, and that it will serve even the immediate personal interests of the politician better to get a man who will have patronage at his disposal for eight years rather than four years. You would think so, but it is not. During the sixteen days of the late Democratic hostilities at Madison Square Garden several billion words were uttered, not more than a few dozen of which—outside of the nominating speeches to which nobody listened—were concerned with the capacity of the various candidates for the discharge of the duties of the office to which they all aspired. Obviously a man cannot be re-elected unless he has been elected the first time, and he can't be elected the first time until he has been nominated. So far the politician can see, and as a rule no farther.

A man who has been elected President but hasn't yet begun his term is somewhat in the position of a contender for a prize-fighting championship. To have become President is honorable and profitable; likewise to have become the logical contender, who gets his picture in the movie news reels all over the world and draws down a large sum of money, win or lose. To be a good President and to win the championship are pretty hard. Many are called but few are chosen. Nevertheless, most fighters' managers would rather have a man who can win the championship than one who merely rises high enough

to fight the champion. Fighters' managers are not the most intelligent class of the body politic, yet we find plenty of candidates' managers who seem to be perfectly satisfied if their candidate is elected to office—if he becomes a contender. Whether or not he can hold down his job is a secondary consideration, if it is considered at all.

Deplorable? Certainly. Stupid? Well, not so certainly. Politics is an uncertain game, much more uncertain than the fight-game. Politics knows all the subterfuges and irregularities of the fight-game; fixed elections are not so common as fixed fights, but they probably would be if it were as easy to throw down a candidate as to persuade a fighter to do what is known among fans as "taking the tank." For you never can tell quite what the great intelligent electorate is going to do. There is more in it for the politicians if their candidate is elected twice than if he is elected once, but there is some sense in the average politician's determination to concentrate on a man who can be elected the first time, without worrying about what happens to him afterward. Very bad Presidents have been re-elected and very good Presidents have been beaten for re-election. It is a painful thought, but true, that virtuous conduct in office arouses only moderate interest in the great intelligent electorate. The turn of the weather is apt to influence more votes in a presidential election than the record of the candidate and his competitors.

So the politician who doesn't worry about what his candidate will do in office, so long as he gets there, is not so stupid as he may seem. He takes no thought for the morrow, for he knows not what a day may bring forth. If he doesn't try very hard to give us a good President, it is because we have shown that we are not

## THE FRIENDS OF INVISIBLE MEN

The system has made of the American politician a privileged character, a man whose private life becomes sacrosanct and inviolate unless he is so clumsy as to be drawn into a lawsuit or arrested. Even then, in part because of influence with court attendants, but chiefly because the reporters are friendly, he often escapes notoriety. I know one high official in a mid-western community who was involved in a particularly nasty scandal while a member of the state legislature. All the reporters knew about it, yet not one of them published even a paragraph about it. To-day only a few intimates have the slightest notion of the man's past.

It is "common knowledge"—that is to say one constantly hears comment to the effect—that members of Congress are addicted to violation of the Volstead Act. Every Washington correspondent knows this to be true and sometimes he writes a humorous but vague story about the "dry legislators who are personally wet." He never mentions the names, however, of the men who vote to uphold prohibition and then hurry to their offices to inspect the latest bootleg

shipment. Liquor was even served in the Senate restaurant—brought from the lockers of the honorable members of the Upper House—until a careless waiter dropped a bottle of whiskey on the floor while a score of visitors were present. The American politician could become intoxicated nightly, beat his wife, use snuff, write free verse, or indulge in any other vice, I maintain, with slight danger of exposure. Private citizens and their private lives are legitimate sources of news. But the politician hands out news, or its semblance and, therefore, the reporters dislike antagonizing him. . . .

For years the legislative sessions at Albany, N.Y., concluded in what were actually drunken debauches. Pianos were trundled into the Assembly chamber and liquor was served on the floor. So notorious did these finally become that the correspondents could no longer entirely ignore them, but their descriptions were greatly softened and spoke only of "good-natured merry-making as the legislative year ended."

—Henry F. Pringle  
"Politicians and the Press," April 1928



particularly eager to have good Presidents. If he concentrates on the available candidates against whom nothing can be said, he has some reason.

Yet, even so, the zeal of the average politician in his search for an irreproachable mediocrity is rather surprising. You seldom see teamwork between two strong men in politics. If the backer is a man of brains, the candidate is generally a stuffed shirt. If the candidate is a man of brains he may be supported by other men of brains, but he is apt to keep them very definitely in their place, and a low place at that. The partnership of complementary talents which has been so brilliantly exemplified in the sporting world by Dempsey and Kearns, by Billy and Ma Sunday, is without parallel in politics. The nearest approach to it, and that remote enough, is perhaps the case of Ma Ferguson and her ex-governor husband. Big men like to promote the candidacy of little men because little men are easy to manage; little men prefer little men as candidates because they are incapable of understanding big men. The rule is broken only when a big man, like Cleveland, Roosevelt, or Wilson, has shown the small men that he is the party's best asset; that he can win where smaller men would lose. Until somebody has proven his vote-getting ability, the small men who do the nominating naturally seek smallness in their nominee. They concentrate on the available man.

**T**HE LOCUS CLASSICUS in the study of availability is the Republican National Convention of 1920, an assemblage of politicians who had an absolutely free hand in the selection of a candidate because they were reasonably sure of being able to elect anybody. We

have Mr. Harding's own word for it that he got the nomination because nobody had anything against him. There were cogent reasons for many voters to oppose Leonard Wood or Hiram Johnson, and still more cogent reasons for the then ruling oligarchy of the Republican party to dislike these more or less self-willed persons. But there was no particular reason for any voter to be dissatisfied with Mr. Harding because he was comparatively unknown outside of Ohio. His disastrous effort to carry the Indiana primaries was rightly interpreted by the party leaders; Hoosier Republicans had not voted against Harding, they had merely voted for Wood, Johnson, and Lowden. With these three out of the way, they would all vote for Harding; and they did.

No doubt the decisive factor in bringing about Harding's nomination was the knowledge of his character which had been obtained by his colleagues in the Senate; he wouldn't have been nominated, for all that, if there had been anything against him in the political sense. But there was nothing against him except the fact, patent to anybody who studied his record and read his campaign speeches, that he was not big enough for the office. The politicians rightly judged that this was no objection at all—not only Republican politicians, but Democratic politicians who, in despair of finding any argument against him that would appeal to the voters, had recourse to a crude and stupid personal slander which did Mr. Harding far more good than harm.

In 1920, then, we got exactly the President we deserved. We deserved it because we permit nominations to be made by the sort of men who sat in that Chicago convention, and because we ratify those nominations in November. In 1920 any Republican would have beaten any Democrat. As to Mr. Harding's administration, it

*Theodore Roosevelt dominating the Republican convention, 1904*



European inquirers spend many anxious years in search for a word, not to sum up America—that would need a dictionary—but to denote something equally applicable all over the States. One might proffer conservatism as the most significant and pervading fact of American public life. I wish, at any rate, that I could feel as certain of the future of any European institution as I do that no man will ever be three times President of the United States. —Sidney Brooks  
"English and American Elections"  
August 1900



only private money but public money. That quality is badly needed in a President just now, but it hardly seems probable that we should have the wisdom to select that kind of President if left to ourselves. And certainly the sort of men who make up our nominating conventions would never of their own accord recognize an inclination to economy as a virtue at all.

Mr. John W. Davis is, or was, perhaps a more admirable type of conservative. The past tense is necessary because he has been recommending himself during the campaign as a liberal and progressive. Yet he was an afterthought, the first and spontaneous choice neither of the party nor of the delegates. With all allowance for Al Smith's brilliant record as Governor of New York and extraordinary knowledge of the business of state administration, as well as for Mr. McAdoo's talent for arousing a devotion like that given to the Veiled Prophet of Khorassan, one must feel that Davis or Underwood or Glass or Walsh would be a better President than either of them. Yet Davis and Walsh and Underwood were not seriously considered till Smith and McAdoo were out of the way, and Glass was never seriously considered at all.

Mr. La Follette certainly was the unanimous and apparently spontaneous choice of the members of the second Cleveland convention, but that convention was selected largely by La Follette himself and composed either of people who were known to be for him or of groups like the Socialist party which were known to feel that he was practically the best they could get. Mr. La Follette, like Mr. Coolidge, nominated himself; and like Mr. Coolidge he reinforced his genuine popular strength with a great deal of political skill. La Follette remembers Thurlow Weed's doctrine that the first axiom of politics

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An Easy Chair, and especially an old Easy Chair, may indulge its harmless fancies and dream dreams at its pleasure. And in that mood this Easy Chair often thinks of the amazement with which some of the simpler earlier fathers of the republic would look upon spectacles which have become so familiar to us that they are either unnoted or regarded as natural and necessary political phenomena. The republic that our fathers established was a rural republic, with the simple virtues of a simple people. Among the simple beliefs of the fathers was the conviction that if the community wished the services of any citizen, it would ask him to serve them. But that a man should propose himself as the man that the community wanted was not the practice. Political ambition was not unknown, for the race was English. But that George Washington ever offered himself as a proper person to fill any position; that he besought people to

voted for him; that he sent for them, or went to them, and argued, cajoled, and implored them to give him an office; that he opened headquarters at a tavern, and established literary bureaus to praise him, and hired agents to urge his candidacy by writing and appealing and proclaiming—all this is not recorded.

John Jay was the second Governor of New York. His political friends earnestly and skillfully did all that they could to secure his election. They appealed to every motive which influences voters under such circumstances. Some votes even may have been bought for him with money, although there is no record of any such transaction, nor is such bribery any worse than bribery by the offer of place, which in this instance, and so far as Mr. Jay was concerned, was out of the question. But if Mr. Jay had busied himself to elect himself, if he had "button-holed" and whispered and flattered,

if he had done anything but pursue steadily the regular order of his life, willing to serve the people as Governor if the majority desired it, and not otherwise, he would not have been the John Jay whom Daniel Webster praised more than he praised any other man. If John Jay had undertaken in any other way than by frank and able discussion of public questions, and by plain declarations of his opinions, to persuade a majority to vote for him, he would have lost his self-respect and the reverence in which his memory is held.

Is it possible to suppose Washington and Jay—had they been Senators of the United States—when their terms were about expiring, leaving their seats in the Senate, hastening back to the capitals of their States, where the Legislature was to choose their successors, opening headquarters at a hotel, holding a kind of court in it, condescending to low arts, drawing a voter, who was



is to be able to carry your own precinct. Wisconsin is always his. When things are going badly he can retire behind his intrenchments, like Ludendorff in Flanders, or Wellington at Torres Vedras, ready for an offensive when the prospect is better. And if he should by any chance be elected, it may be predicted that before his first year is out most of his supporters will feel that he is anything but the sort of President they deserve.

It is not La Follette's fault that his party is largely ragtag and bobtail; most of the talented men prefer their steady jobs with the old-established going concerns, the Democratic and Republican parties. If La Follette is elected this will be changed. King David's convention that assembled in the Cave of Adullam was also largely ragtag and bobtail. But when David got into office he set the example which most radical leaders have followed ever since, and took over as much of the conservatives' policy as seemed useful. Naturally he took over many conservatives too, since everybody loves a winner, and the lunatic fringe of Adullam presently found itself out in the cold. So would it be with La Follette. Prophecy is notoriously a gratuitous form of error, but it is no bad guess that if La Follette were President most of the complaints against him would come from the Left Wing rather than the Right.

In the thirty years before the Harding administration we had three strong Presidents and two weak Presidents. Grover Cleveland was loved for the enemies he had made, but not by the majority of the men who nominated him three times and elected him twice. Like all politicians, they were afraid of him because he had made enemies; they nominated him because they had discovered that he could be elected. Yet he could not have been elected in 1892 if he hadn't been elected in 1884, and

he couldn't have been elected in 1884 but for two or three lucky breaks.

McKinley was no brilliant President but he was good enough for the time. The McKinley administration had little to do with the wave of prosperity that came in at the end of the century, but at least it did not hinder it as a Bryan administration would have done. But McKinley was Mark Hanna's personal gift to the nation. Roosevelt was an accident to begin with and his own creation thereafter. The blameless Mr. Taft, sentenced to the White House as a sort of penal servitude, at least gave the public an object lesson in the futility of good intentions. Those who accepted him at Roosevelt's hands would have accepted anyone else as readily. We might easily have fared worse.

As for Mr. Wilson, he owed his nomination to the accident of the two-thirds rule, his election to the accident of Republican division, and his re-election to the ineptitude of Mr. Hughes. Champ Clark was the President we deserved in 1912, and even Republicans will probably feel that the country was better off in Wilson's hands during the War years. When the great intelligent electorate is least dominated by powerful individuals, when it is most itself and its party delegates can function most in harmony with the popular thought, we get somebody like Harding or Franklin Pierce. That is the sort of President we deserve. The fact that despite the frequency of weak Presidents we have usually had the luck to have able Presidents when we needed them lends support to the view that Divine Providence gives special attention to the welfare of the American people. Some of us may feel, however, that even if we have this vast deposit of mercy subject to check, we have come dangerously near overdrawing our account. □

## MOUSING INTRIGUE ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

to be propitiated, away from a chamber-maid's slop closet, lest some eavesdropper should be hidden in it to hear what he could—an incident in such a contest which the Easy Chair knew—and recommending themselves to voters by methods which as gentlemen they must have scorned? Such conduct in Washington and Jay is inconceivable. Such a spectacle at the beginning of the government of the United States under the Constitution would have been regarded as evidence that the system was rotten before it was ripe. Perhaps Washington and Jay were altogether too good for this world. But if a republic has no place for such men, what is it good for?

Times and methods have changed. The office of Governor sought John Jay, as that of President sought George Washington. In our time, however, the man seeks the office. At this point let not the incautious reader suppose that the Easy Chair is be-

coming querulous and ideally exigent, or that it secretly pines for an Oriental despotism. Do we denounce a lofty and patriotic political ambition? Do we demand an austere and impossible virtue? Do we mean to say that a man with the instinct and power of leadership shall not aspire to lead? Do we hint that in a self-governing state the desire to mould its decrees or to direct their execution is an unworthy and mean desire?

Far from it. Nothing is more natural, nothing more admirable, than the aspiration of good and capable men to lead men and to govern great states. But honorable objects must be honorably sought. A man with a true political ambition, with the instinct of leadership, advocates wise measures, and, by the power which belongs to the instinct, impresses his views upon the minds of others. He leads by natural ascendancy, and they naturally and gladly follow. So Washington led. So Jay was a leader.

But the modern system of a "still hunt," of private, illicit influence upon those whose votes elect to high place, of mousing intrigue, of bargain and barter and corruption, is not only dishonorable, but it is destructive of the essential principle of the government. The majority must rule. But only an honest majority can rule justly. To open headquarters at a capital in order to procure votes not by personal preference founded upon knowledge of character and of a career, but by private solicitation and representation and trade, and so to secure a majority, is to cheat the people and to caricature the popular principle. A majority so obtained is not a moral majority. It is not only not binding, it is to be repudiated as a crime against the people.

What was good enough for Jay and Washington, ought to be good enough for us.

—“Editor's Easy Chair”  
February 1882



# The Presidential Style

by Frederick Lewis  
Allen

JULY 1923

There is one thing that I wish the excavators would find out for us about our friend King Tut-Ankh-Amen (aside from the little question of how the boys who played round with him pronounced his name). I should like to know what sort of letter he used to write to the Federated Nile Dredgers of Thebes or the National Pyramid Study Institute, declining their very kind invitation to attend their annual banquet and get-together and to say a few words on Egyptian foreign policy. It would be instructive to learn whether the sort of literary style which is employed on similar occasions by our American presidents, cabinet officers, governors, mayors, and other lords temporal is an inherited perquisite of authority, or whether it is a new native growth.

You know the sort of style I mean. Occupants of the White House seem in general to be more completely addicted to it than anyone else. The public correspondence of the President of the United States is always of a peculiarly sonorous and pontifical quality, suitable for large-chested declamation to an accompaniment of brass instruments and kettledrums. . . .

It must be an awful strain to have to write presidentially. If the President is invited to the fiftieth anniversary picnic of the Bridgeport Dancing Masters' Club, he can't just sit down and dash off:

DEAR SIR:

It was perfectly corking of you to invite me to your party, and I know I'd have a swell time if I went, but honestly I can't make it. I'm all tied up, and the Secretary of State says to stay round while we try to

think what to do next. Isn't that just rotten?

Regards to the boys.

No, he can't write that way. What he has to turn out is more like this:

DEAR SIR:

It is with profound regret that I find, on consulting my list of engagements, that pressure of important business renders it impossible for me to be absent from the Capital at the time of your fiftieth anniversary picnic. No exercise, no pastime, no sport suited to the polished surface of a ballroom floor is more essential than is dancing to the recreative development and orderly progress of the two sexes upon which depends in the last analysis the ultimate welfare of the American people. No form of celebration so befits an association of instructors in this historic art as a picnic, combining as it does the dignity of co-operative nourishment with a suitable regard for the need of healthful play. May I take the liberty of expressing to the members of the Club my very sincere wishes for their continued prosperity?

That sort of style, like a silk hat on the Fourth of July, is a mark of high political rank. A President never says "makes it impossible" when he can say "renders it impossible." He likes to announce the results of "the last analysis," whatever that may be. (Presumably, it is related to the "acid test.") . . .

A peculiarity of these presidential outpourings is that they seem to be especially valued when incorporated, not in mere messages or letters, but in telegrams. There is a certain flavor of urgency about a telegram which adds to the effect. It is one thing for the chairman of the Amalgamated Felt Hat Salesmen's dinner to rise and say, "I have here, gentlemen, a letter from the President of the United States, whom we had hoped to have with us to-night"; it is quite another thing for him to hold up a real telegram. There is a spasm of excitement all over the room. A telegram! Well now! That shows what the President thinks of the Amalgamated! Not only does the

President congratulate the Felt Hat Salesmen on the enterprising and farsighted spirit in which American business men to-day are collectively meeting the problems of the new era which has succeeded the disturbances of war and the perplexities of reconstruction; not only is he aware of the unquestioned public service rendered by any industry which undertakes, in a spirit of devotion to the common interest, to protect the heads of a free people from exposure to the elements, and thus to avert those ailments, bronchial or catarrhal, which might render them unfit for the exercise of their constitutional rights and for the support of their families in accordance with an American standard of living; but he is so worked up over it that he just can't wait for the mails, and pays a dollar and nineteen cents for a telegram! This addiction to telegraphic correspondence on the part of high officials has gone so far that I look shortly for the publication of the "Life and Night-Letters" of some of our public characters.

I am curious to know how many of these documents the President actually writes himself; all the more so because I once wrote a letter and several telegrams for a corporation president's signature, and they went up to him through official channels, and he finally signed them and sent them off just as if they were his own productions. . . . You ought to have seen my letter. It contained at least one "may I not" and a few sets of nicely balanced parallel phrases with the word "very" in them, and it ended "Cordially and sincerely yours." To write pontifical letters for a White House President would be just as easy.

But I am afraid the wear and tear would begin to tell, after a while, in the official letter-writer's outside life. His manner would be liable to become a little too portentous. The effect on his own private correspondence would be something like the effect of the life-and-letters mania.

The life-and-letters mania, I should explain, is an obsession that strikes people when they first become sufficiently prominent to get the idea that their letters are likely to be preserved for ultimate publication. Sometimes it comes over its victims all of a sudden. One day a man will be writing, "Dear Mr. Jones: We have your order and will buy Utah, Texas and Northern according to your instructions"; and the next day, with a far-away look in his eyes, he will astonish his stenographer by dictating:

DEAR MR. JONES:

We are making ready to buy Utah, Texas and Northern according to your instructions. And what an inspiring business it is, my dear friend, this purchasing of property-rights in the great and growing West! To feel that one has a stake in it: is not that, in the last analysis, the feeling of a pioneer, the spirit which has made America what she is? And yet fools say that there is no romance in business! I tell you, Jones, the West is the land of the future. There's little enough that any of us can do for the upbuilding of our great nation, but at least we can have the satisfaction of doing our part, as simple, big-hearted business men in bringing about trade expansion and port development and who shall say that we have not thereby served the cause of American prosperity?

You can see by the fellow's expression while he dictates that he's wondering whether some day that letter won't look pretty well in print.

The temptations of the official letter-writer would be similar. After a while it might become difficult for him even to pay his house rent without indulging in a few mighty periods on the patriotic significance (in the last analysis, of course) of the American home, with references to Abraham Lincoln, log cabins, the influence of good mothers, and the flag. Probably, the job would have drawbacks after all, and it is best to discourage an ambitious young man from thinking that he had rather be writer than be President. The President, unfortunately, has to be both.



## Educating the Crowd

The better the man, the more the crowd likes him. It may, indeed, be very much mistaken. But it applauds what it believes him to be; and the duty of the philosopher who deplores the kind of man that the crowd cheers is to show what kind of man he is. The Easy Chair has heard the name of Mr. Jonathan Wild loudly and warmly cheered at a public meeting, and other Easy Chairs have been exceedingly disgusted with the applause. But the crowd knew that Wild had thrashed a sneak thief whom he saw stealing a blind man's dog. Nobody denied that he had done that. And when Mr. Wild's political opponents declared that he had himself picked the blind man's pocket, the crowd attributed the story to malice, and would not believe it. It has no time to investigate closely, and it will not trust the

tale of his opponents. But if one of themselves, whom they know to be their friend, points out to them the proof, they will not reject it. When Tweed gave fifty thousand dollars' worth of coal to the poor, the poor saw and felt only his generosity; and if his opponents had charged that it was stolen, the poor would have mobbed them, and carried Tweed on their shoulders. But if one whom they trusted had traced that coal money from the earnings of the laborer, through his rent and the taxes of his landlord, into the public treasury, the laborer would have seen that the coal was bought with his own money, which Tweed had stolen, and his cheers would have changed into curses.

—"Editor's Easy Chair"

December 1876

## WHY SHOULD THE MAJORITY RULE?

by Walter Lippmann

MARCH 1926

**D**URING the Dayton trial there was much discussion about what had happened to Mr. Bryan. How had a progressive democrat become so illiberal? How did it happen that the leader of the hosts of progress in 1896 was the leader of the hosts of darkness in 1925?

It was said that he had grown old. It was said that he was running for President. It was said that he had the ambition to lead an uprising of fundamentalists and prohibitionists. It was said that he was a beaten orator who had found his last applauding audience in the backwoods. And it was said that he had undergone a passionate religious conversion.

No matter whether the comment was charitable or malicious, it was always an explanation. There was always the assumption that Mr. Bryan had changed and, that in changing, he had departed from the cardinal tenets of his political faith. Mr. Bryan vehemently denied this and, on reflection, I am now inclined to think he was right. We were too hasty. Mr. Bryan's career was more logical and of a piece than it looked. There was no such contradiction, as most of us assumed, in the spectacle of the Great Commoner fighting for the legal suppression of scientific teaching.

He argued that a majority of the voters in Tennessee had the right to decide what should be taught in their schools. He had always argued that a majority had the right to decide. He had insisted on their right to decide on war and peace, on their right to make and unmake laws and lawmakers. He had fought to extend the suffrage so that the largest possible majority might help to decide; he had fought for the direct election of senators, for the initiative and referendum and direct primary, and for every other device which would permit the people to rule. He had always insisted that the people should rule. And he had never qualified this

faith by saying what they should rule and how. It was no great transformation of thought, and certainly it was not for him an abandonment of principle to say that, if a majority in Tennessee was fundamentalist, then the public schools in Tennessee should be conducted on fundamentalist principles.

To question this right of the majority would have seemed to him as heretical as to question the fundamentalist creed. Mr. Bryan was as true to his political as he was to his religious faith. He had always believed in the sanctity of the text of the Bible. He had always believed that a majority of the people should rule. Here in Tennessee was a majority which believed in the sanctity of the text. To lead this majority was the logical climax of his career, and he died fighting for a cause in which the two great dogmas of his life were both at stake.

Given his two premises, I do not see how it is possible to escape his conclusions. If every word of the first chapter of Genesis is directly inspired by an omniscient and omnipotent God, then there is no honest way of accepting what scientists teach about the origin of man. And if the doctrine of majority rule is based on the eternal and inherent rights of man, then it is the only true basis of government, and there can be no fair objections to the moral basis of a law made by a fundamentalist majority in Tennessee. It is no answer to Mr. Bryan to say that the law is absurd, obscurantist, and reactionary. It follows from his premises, and it can be attacked radically only by attacking his premises.

This first premise: that the text of the Bible was written, as John Donne put it, by the Secretaries of the Holy Ghost, I shall not attempt to discuss here. There exists a vast literature of criticism. I am interested in his second premise: that the majority is of right sovereign in all things. And here the position is



## The National Division

In the North the alternation of winter and summer allots for the life of man distinct and different duties. Summer is the season of outdoor labor, winter is spent in the dwelling. In the South labor may be continuous, though it may vary. The Northern man must do to-day that which the Southern man may put off till to-morrow. For this reason the Northern man must be industrious; the Southern may be indolent, having less foresight and a less tendency to regulated habits. The cold, bringing with it a partial cessation from labor, affords also an opportunity for forethought and reflection; and hence the Northern man acquires a habit of not acting without consideration, and is slower in the initiation of his movements. The Southern man is prone to act without reflection; he does not fairly weigh the last consequences of what he is about to do. The one is cautious, the other impulsive. Winter, with its cheerlessness and discomforts, gives to the Northern man his richest blessing; it teaches him to cling to his hearthstone and his family. In times of war that blessing proves to be his weakness; he is vanquished if his dwelling be seized. The Southern man cares nothing for that. Cut off from the prompting of external Nature for so large a portion of the year, the mind in the North becomes self-occupied; it contents itself with but few ideas, which it considers from many points of view. It is apt to fasten itself intently on one, and pursue it with fanatical perseverance. A Southern nation, which is continually under the influence of the sky, which is continually prompted to varying thoughts, will indulge in a superfluity of ideas, and deal with them all superficially; more volatile than reflective, it can never have a constant love for a fixed constitution. Once resolved to act, the intention of the North, sustained by reason alone, will outlast the enthusiasm of the South. In physical courage the two are equal; but the North will prevail, through its habits of labor, of method, and its inexorable perseverance. Long ago, writers who have paid attention to these subjects have affirmed that the South will fight for the benefit of its leaders, but the North will conquer for the benefit of all. To convince the man who lives under a roof, an appeal must be made to his understanding; to convince him who lives under the sky, the appeal must be to his feelings.

—John William Draper

"Influence of Climate Upon National Character," August 1865

The Granger Collection



From Harper's Weekly, 1864

quite different. There is a literature of dissent and of satire and denunciation. But there exists no carefully worked-out higher criticism of a dogma which, in theory at least, constitutes the fundamental principle of nearly every government in the western world. On the contrary, the main effort of political thinkers during the last few generations has been devoted to vindicating the rights of masses of men against the vested rights of clerics and kings and nobles and men of property. There has been a running counter attack from those who distrusted the people, or had some interest in opposing their enfranchisement, but I do not know of any serious attempt to reach a clear understanding of where and when the majority principle applies.

Mr. Bryan applied it absolutely at Dayton, and thereby did a service to democratic thinking. For he reduced to absurdity a dogma which had been held carelessly but almost universally, and thus demonstrated that it was time to reconsider the premises of the democratic faith. Those who believed in democracy have always assumed that the majority should rule. They have assumed that, even if the majority is not wise, it is on the road to wisdom, and that with sufficient education the people would learn how to rule. But in Tennessee the people used their power to prevent their own children from learning, not merely the doctrine of evolution, but the spirit and method by which learning is possible. They had used their right to rule in order to weaken the agency which they had set up in order that they might learn how to rule. They had used the prerogatives of democracy to destroy the hopes of democracy.

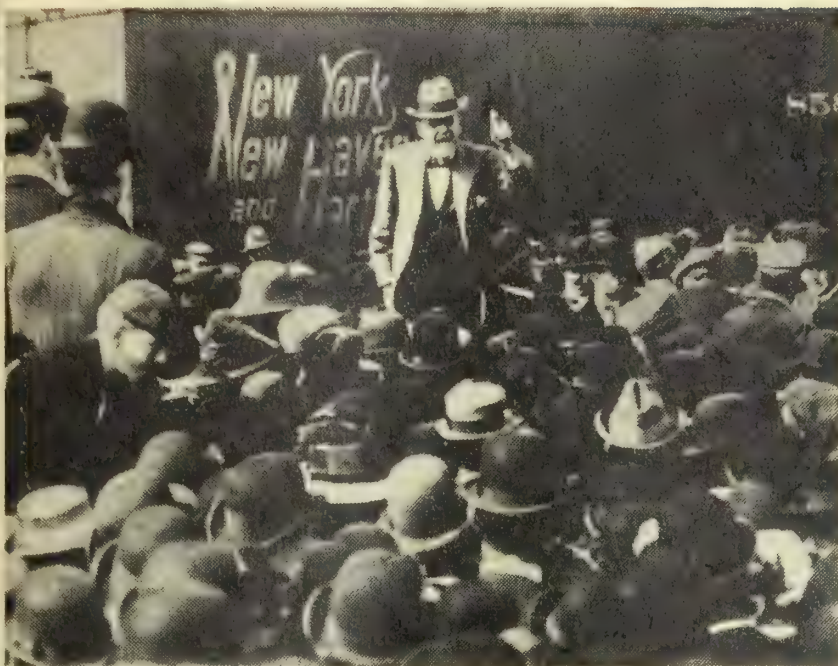
After this demonstration in Tennessee it was no longer possible to doubt that the dogma of majority rule contains within it some sort of deep and destructive confusion.

**I**N EXPLORING this dogma it will be best to begin at the very beginning with the primitive intuition from which the whole democratic view of life is derived. It is a feeling of ultimate equality and fellowship with all other creatures.

There is no worldly sense in this feeling, for it is reasoned from the heart: "there you are, sir, and there is your neighbor. You are better born than he, you are richer, you are stronger, you are handsomer, nay, you are better, wiser, kinder, more likable; you have given more to your fellowmen and taken less than he. By any and every test of intelligence, of virtue, of usefulness, you are demonstrably a better man than he, and yet—absurd as it sounds—these differences do not matter, for the last part of him is untouchable and incomparable and unique and universal." Either you feel this or you do not; when you do not feel it the superiorities that the world acknowledges seem like mountainous waves at sea; when you do feel it they are slight and impermanent ripples upon a vast ocean. Men were possessed by this feeling long before they had imagined the possibility of democratic government. They spoke of it in many ways but the essential quality of feeling is the same from Buddha to St. Francis to Whitman.

There is no way of proving the doctrine that all souls are precious in the eyes of God, or, as Dean Inge recently put it, that "the personality of every man and woman is sacred and inviolable." The doctrine proceeds from a mystical intuition. There is felt to be a spiritual reality behind and independent of the visible character and behavior of a man. We have no scientific evidence that this exists. But we know each of us, in a way too certain for doubting, that, after all the weighing and comparing and judging of us is done, there is something left over which is the heart of the matter. Hence our conviction when we ourselves are judged





Eugene V. Debs campaigning for President, 1912

The pursuit of votes in a great democracy should prove exhilarating. I have not found it so. I have learned much, and I commend the undertaking to students of political science—in fact, to all who would better understand their country. But the temptation to pussy-foot, to evade and parry rather than to voice one's candid opinion, is so overwhelming that the experience will surely torment any except the flintiest conscience.

—Richard L. Neuberger  
"I Run for Office," February 1947

that mercy is more just than justice. When we know the facts as we can know only the facts about ourselves, there is something too coarse in all the concepts of the intelligence and something too rough in all the standards of morality. The judgments of men fall upon behavior. They may be necessary judgments, but we do not believe they are final. There is something else, which is inadmissible, perhaps, as evidence in this world, which would weigh mightily before divine justice.

Each of us knows that of himself, and some attribute the same reserved value to others. Some natures with a genius for sympathy extend it to everyone they know and can imagine; others can barely project it to their wives and children. But even though few really have this sympathy with all men, there is enough of it abroad, reinforced perhaps with each man's dread of his fate in the unknown, to establish the doctrine rather generally. So we execute the murderer, but out of respect for an inviolable part of him we allow him the consolation of a priest and we bury him respectfully when he is dead. For we believe that, however terrible was his conduct, there is in him, nevertheless, though no human mind can detect it, a final quality which makes him part of our own destiny in the universe.

I can think of no inherent reason why men should entertain this mystical respect for other men. But it is easy to show how much that we find best in the world would be lost if the sense of equality and fellowship were lost. If we judged and were judged by our visible behavior alone, the inner defenses of civility and friendship and enduring love would be reached. Outward conduct is not good enough to endure a cold and steady analysis. Only an animal affection become habitual and reflected in mystical respect can blind people sufficient-

ly to our faults. They would not like us enough to pardon us if all they had to go on was a strict behaviorist account of our conduct. They must reach deeper, blindly and confidently, to something which they know is likable although they do not know why. Otherwise the inequalities of men would be intolerable. The strong, the clever, the beautiful, the competent, and the good would make life miserable for their neighbors. They would be unbearable with their superiorities, and they would find unbearable the sense of inferiority they implanted in others. There would be no term upon the arrogance of the successful and the envy of the defeated. For without the mystic sense of equality the obvious inequalities would seem unalterable.

These temporal differences are seen in perspective by the doctrine that in the light of eternity there are no differences at all.

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE for most of us, however, to consider anything very clearly or steadily in the light of eternity. The doctrine of ultimate human equality cannot be tested in human experience; it rests on a faith which transcends experience. That is why those who understood the doctrine have always been ascetic; they ignored or renounced worldly goods and worldly standards. These things belonged to Caesar. The mystical democrat did not say that they should not belong to Caesar; he said that they would be of no use to Caesar ultimately, and that, therefore, they were not to be taken seriously now.

But in the reception of this subtle argument the essential reservation was soon obscured. The mystics were preaching equality only to those men who had renounced their carnal appetites; they were welcomed as



## CHAFED ELBOWS

Politics is perpetual warfare between two influences—a desire on the part of the individual in it to render a maximum of good with a minimum of personal sacrifice and expenditure of one's own money and effort, and a desire on the part of the same individual to obtain a maximum of personal prestige and vainglory with a minimum of regard for public funds and public needs. Having said which, the writer hastens to add that the aberrations of politics are confined to no single political party of this or preceding generations. Modern methods may be more subtle because processes of deception are nowadays more complex, but fundamentally the art of fooling the people part of the time goes on from one administration to another, from one term of office to another, while the public intermittently learns its lesson and swaps its horses.

Greatest among the flaws of democracy nowadays is the lack of courage of the elected or appointed official. It is a declining standard. Mere recollection of the Clays and the Websters and the Calhouns and the Sumners and the Jacksons and the Adamses and the Hamiltons of yesteryears only accentuates the historical fact that

valor is as rare in the political world as altruism is in the commercial world.

To watch affairs at the seat of government in Washington from year to year and then occasionally to make a trip across country where an abiding faith in the legislators rises with innocent reverence to meet you is to touch elbows with the tragedy of modern political life. People elect and people defeat, people praise and people condemn, people debate and work themselves into a fuming rage on the pros and cons of a political personality who all too often is neither worth the salary he gets nor deserving the profound prestige bestowed upon him.

Instances without number accumulate from month to month and year to year of the debauchery of public office. Graft, that ugly word which no longer takes the crude form of money but whose equivalent in social position, future business connections, or even promises of help in climbing a rung or two on the political ladder itself, is so deeply imbedded in our system of today as to be invisible to the community at large.

—David Lawrence

"Political Cowardice," January 1920.

preachers of equality in this world. Thus the doctrine that I am as good as you in eternity because all the standards of goodness are finite and temporary, was converted into the doctrine that I am as good as you are in this world by this world's standards. The mystics had attained a sense of equality by transcending and renouncing all the standards by which we measure inequality. The populace retained its appetites and its standards and then sought to deny the inequalities which they produced and revealed.

The mystical democrat had said, "Gold and precious stones are of no account"; the literal democrat understood him to say that everybody ought to have gold and precious stones. The mystical democrat had said, "Beauty is only skin deep"; and the literal democrat preened himself and said, "I always suspected I was as handsome as you." Reason, intelligence, learning, wisdom, dealt for the mystic only with passing events in a temporal world and could help men little to fathom the ultimate meaning of creation; to the literal democrat this incapacity of reason was evidence that one man's notion was intrinsically as good as another's.

Thus the primitive intuition of democracy became the animus of a philosophy which denied that there could be an order of values among men. Any opinion, any taste, any action was intrinsically as good as any other. Each stands on its own bottom and guarantees itself. If I feel strongly about it, it is right; there is no other test. It is right not only as against your opinion, but against my own opinions, about which I no longer feel so strongly. There is no arbitrament by which the relative value of opinions is determined. They are all free, they are all equal, all have the same rights and powers.

Since no value can be placed upon an opinion, there is no way in this philosophy of deciding between opin-

ions except to count them. Thus the mystical sense of equality was translated to mean in practice that two minds are better than one mind and two souls better than one soul. Your true mystic would be horrified at the notion that you can add up souls and that the greater number is superior to the lesser. To him souls are imponderable and incommensurable; that is the only sense in which they are truly equal. And yet in the name of that sense of equality which he attains by denying that the worth of a soul can be measured, the worldly democrats have made the mere counting of souls the final arbiter of all worth. It is a curious misunderstanding; Mr. Bryan brought it into high relief during the Tennessee case. The spiritual doctrine that all men will stand at last equal before the throne of God meant to him that all men are equally good biologists before the ballotbox of Tennessee. That kind of democracy is quite evidently a gross materialization of an idea that in essence cannot be materialized. It is a confusing interchange of two worlds that are not interchangeable.

**A**LTHOUGH THE principle of majority rule derives a certain sanctity from the mystical sense of equality, it is really quite unrelated to it. There is nothing in the teachings of Jesus or St. Francis which justifies us in thinking that the opinions of fifty-one per cent of a group are better than the opinions of forty-nine per cent. The mystical doctrine of equality ignores the standards of the world and recognizes each soul as unique; the principle of majority rule is a device for establishing the standards of action in this world by the crude and obvious device of adding up voters. Yet owing to a confusion between the two, the mystical doctrine has been brutalized and made absurd,



## His Master's Appointment

Nor is the position of an American cabinet member so much more attractive. [than President] It is only by presidential favor that he attains his office. Service to the party, outstanding ability, long experience in affairs, none of these things give him a prescriptive right to his position. He is a personal nomination of his master. He can make his policy effective only as he convinces the President on the one hand or placates Congress on the other. Resounding success may bring him no credit if President or Congress be jealous; and he has nothing to hope for from the prospect of resignation. Nothing, indeed, in the context of the cabinet has been more significant in recent years than the fact that Colonel House was able to do more than any member of the cabinet of his time without finding it necessary to assume office. For the work of a cabinet member is too little in the public view to count in any final way. Like a sudden tempest, they are come and gone. To occupy a place gives no lien on the gratitude of the party. The relationship to Congress is too tenuous and indirect to make it easy for them to impinge at all concretely on the pub-

lic. A few men, like Mr. Hay and Mr. Root, have been significant in modern times; but, in general, neither long experience nor outstanding qualities have been necessary for the tenure of cabinet office. The requirements of sectionalism, moreover, act as a deterrent to possible aspirants; the need to represent the West may check the ambition of youthful ability in New York or Cleveland long before cabinet office has become an object of conscious desire. The process of selection is far too haphazard; the prospect offers no such measure of reasonable certainty as parliamentary systems afford. The power of the office, moreover, is only dubiously attractive as against some of the alternative political positions. A senator, for instance, need never resign in order to express dissent; and where he differs he can speak from one of the few political platforms in America to which attention is paid. But a cabinet member in retirement is, with rare exceptions, one of the unburied dead; and it is seldom that public opinion desires his emergence from the tomb.

—Harold J. Laski

"The American Political System," June 1928

and the principle of majority rule has acquired an unction that protects it from criticism. A mere political expedient, worth using only when it is necessary or demonstrably useful to the conduct of affairs, has been hallowed by an altogether adventitious sanctity due to an association of ideas with a religious hope of salvation.

Once we succeed in disentangling this confusion of ideas, it becomes apparent that the principle of majority rule is wholly alien to what the humane mystic feels. The rule of the majority is the rule of force. For while nobody can seriously maintain that the greatest number must have the greatest wisdom or the greatest virtue, there is no denying that under modern social conditions they are likely to have the most power. I say likely to have, for we are reminded by the recent history of Russia and of Italy that organized and armed minorities can under certain circumstances disfranchise the majority. Nevertheless, it is a good working premise that in the long run the greater force resides in the greater number, and what we call a democratic society might be defined for certain purposes as one in which the majority is always prepared to put down a revolutionary minority.

The apologists of democracy have done their best to dissemble the true nature of majority rule. They have argued that by some mysterious process the opinion to which a majority subscribes is true and righteous. They have even attempted to endow the sovereign majority with the inspiration of an infallible church and of kings by the grace of God. It was a natural mistake. Although they saw clearly enough that the utterances of the church were the decisions of the ruling clergy, and that the divine guidance of the king was exercised by his courtiers, they were not prepared to admit that the new sovereign was a purely temporal ruler. They felt certain they must ascribe to the ma-

jority of the voters the same supernatural excellence which had always adhered to the traditional rulers. Throughout the Nineteenth Century, therefore, the people were flattered and mystified by hearing that deep within a fixed percentage of them there lay the same divine inspiration and the same gifts of revelation which men had attributed previously to the established authorities.

And then just as in the past men had invented a mythical ancestry for their king, tracing his line back to David or Æneas or Zeus himself, so the minnesingers of democracy have invented their own account of the rise of popular government. The classic legend is to be found in the theory of the Social Contract, and few naïve democrats are without traces of belief in this legend. They imagine that somehow "the people" got together and established nations and governments and institutions. Yet the historic record plainly shows that the progress of democracy has consisted in an increasing participation of an increasing number of people in the management of institutions they neither created nor willed. And the record shows, too, that new numbers were allowed to participate when they were powerful enough to force their way in; they were enfranchised not because "society" sought the benefits of their wisdom, and not because "society" wished them to have power; they were enfranchised because they had power, and giving them the vote was the least disturbing way of letting them exercise their power. For the principle of majority rule is the mildest form in which the force of numbers can be exercised. It is a pacific substitute for civil war in which the opposing armies are counted and the victory is awarded to the larger before any blood is shed.

Except in the sacred tests of democracy and in the incantations of the orators, we hardly take the trouble



## Votes for Emptiness

The success of the Republican party is the best recommendation for the principle of beating all things to all men. The Democrats this year came very near taking a definite stand on two or three important issues, and in consequence gravely damaged their chances of beating the Republicans, who took no stand on anything at all. John W. Davis, before his nomination, was generally known as a conservative. When he came before the convention after his nomination he seized the chance to say that he was a liberal; and most of the assembled Democrats seemed to feel that this was only good sense. He had discovered the Republican secret of avoiding issues. So has La Follette, who has been a Republican long enough to know what has made the party suc-

cessful; if his new party stands for anything very definite or takes sides on a controversial question, it will be his misfortune and not his fault.

And, as observed, the voters seem to like it—at least they vote for men who say nothing and against men who say something. To do otherwise would mean the devoting of thought and effort to politics, and few voters are ready to do that. "Applause, mingled with boos and hisses" was the most frequently recurrent line in the stenographic reports of the Democratic convention, and with reason. Applause, mingled with boos and hisses, is about all that the average voter is able or willing to contribute to public life.

—Elmer Davis

"Politics—A Two-Handed Game"

October 1924

to pretend that the rule of the majority is not at bottom a rule of force. What other virtue can there be in fifty-one per cent except the brute fact that fifty-one is more than forty-nine? The rule of fifty-one per cent is a convenience, it is for certain matters a satisfactory political device, it is for others the lesser of two evils, and for still others it is acceptable because we do not know any less troublesome method of obtaining a political decision. But it may easily become an absurd tyranny if we regard it worshipfully, as though it were more than a political device. We have lost all sense of its true meaning when we imagine that the opinion of fifty-one per cent is in some high fashion the true opinion of the whole hundred per cent, or indulge in the sophistry that the rule of a majority is based upon the ultimate equality of man.

**A**T DAYTON Mr. Bryan contended that in schools supported by the state the majority of the voters had a right to determine what should be taught. If my analysis is correct, there is no fact from which that right can be derived except the fact that the majority is stronger than the minority. It cannot be argued that the majority in Tennessee represented the whole people of Tennessee; nor that fifty-one Tennesseans are better than forty-nine Tennesseans; nor that they were better biologists, or better Christians, or better parents, or better Americans. It cannot be said they are necessarily more in tune with the ultimate judgments of God. All that can be said for them is that there are more of them, and that in a world ruled by force it may be necessary to defer to the force they exercise.

When the majority exercises that force to destroy the public schools, the minority may have to yield for

a time to this force but there is no reason why they should accept the result. For the votes of a majority have no intrinsic bearing on the conduct of a school. They are external facts to be taken into consideration like the weather or the hazard of fire. Guidance for a school can come ultimately only from educators, and the question of what shall be taught as biology can be determined only by biologists. The votes of a majority do not settle anything here and they are entitled to no respect whatever. They may be right or they may be wrong; there is nothing in the majority principle which will make them either right or wrong. In the conduct of schools, and especially as to the details of the curriculum, the majority principle is an obvious irrelevance. It is not even a convenient device, as it is in the determination, say, of who shall pay the taxes.

**B**UT WHAT GOOD is it to deny the competence of the majority when you have admitted that it has the power to enforce its decisions? I enter this denial myself because I prefer clarity to confusion, and the ascriptions of wisdom to fifty-one per cent seems to me a pernicious confusion. But I do it also because I have some hope that the exorcising of the superstition which has become attached to majority rule will weaken its hold upon the popular imagination, and tend therefore to keep it within convenient limits. Mr. Bryan would not have won the logical victory he won at Dayton if educated people had not been caught in a tangle of ideas which made it seem as if the acknowledgment of the absolutism of the majority was necessary to faith in the final value of the human soul. It seems to me that a rigorous untangling of this confusion may help to arm the minority for a more effective resistance in the future. □



# THE TROUBLE WITH AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

by Thomas Babington Macaulay

The following letters were addressed to Henry S. Randall of New York, agriculturist, educator, and author of a biography of Thomas Jefferson. Twenty years after Macaulay wrote them, Randall's widow gave permission for their publication in Harpers's. They appeared in the February 1877 issue under the title "Lord Macaulay on American Institutions," and were followed directly by a qualification in the "Editor's Easy Chair," a portion of which appears below.

With repeated thanks, I have the honor to be, Sir, your faithful servant,

T. B. MACAULAY.

HOLLY LODGE, KENSINGTON, LONDON, May 23, 1857.

DEAR SIR,—The four volumes of the *Colonial History of New York* reached me safely. I assure you that I shall value them highly. They contain much to interest an English as well as an American reader. Pray accept my thanks, and convey them to the Regents of the University.

You are surprised to learn that I have not a high opinion of Mr. Jefferson, and I am surprised at your surprise. I am certain that I never wrote a line, and that I never, in Parliament, in conversation, or even on the hustings—a place where it is the fashion to court the populace—uttered a word indicating an opinion that the supreme authority in a state ought to be intrusted to the majority of citizens told by the head; in other words, to the poorest and most ignorant part of society. I have long been convinced that institutions purely democratic must, sooner or later, destroy liberty or civilization, or both. In Europe, where the populace is dense, the effect of such institutions would be almost instantaneous. What happened lately in France is an example. In 1848 a pure democracy was established there. During a short time there was reason to expect a general spoliation, a national bankruptcy, a new partition of the soil, a maximum of prices, a ruinous load of taxation laid on the rich for the purpose of supporting the poor in idleness. Such a system would, in twenty years, have made France as poor and barbarous as the France of the Carolingians. Happily the danger was averted; and now there is a despotism, a silent tribune, an enslaved press. Liberty is gone, but civilization

has been saved. I have not the smallest doubt that, if we had a purely democratic government here, the effect would be the same. Either the poor would plunder the rich, and civilization would perish, or order and prosperity would be saved by a strong military government, and liberty would perish. You may think that your country enjoys an exemption from these evils. I will frankly own to you that I am of a very different opinion. Your fate I believe to be certain, though it is deferred by a physical cause. As long as you have a boundless extent of fertile and unoccupied land, your laboring population will be far more at ease than the laboring population of the Old World, and, while that is the case, the Jefferson politics may continue to exist without causing any fatal calamity. But the time will come when New England will be as thickly peopled as old England. Wages will be as low, and will fluctuate as much with you as with us. You will have your Manchesters and Birminghams, and in those Manchesters and Birminghams hundreds of thousands of artisans will assuredly be sometimes out of work. Then your institutions will be fairly brought to the test. Distress every where makes the laborer mutinous and discontented, and inclines him to listen with eagerness to agitators who tell him that it is a monstrous iniquity that one man should have a million while another can not get a full meal. In bad years there is plenty of grumbling here, and sometimes a little rioting. But it matters little. For here the sufferers are not the rulers. The supreme power is in the hands of a class, numerous indeed, but select; of an educated class; of a class which is, and knows itself to be, deeply interested in the security of property and the maintenance of order. Accordingly, the malcontents are firmly yet gently restrained. The bad time is got

over without robbing the wealthy to relieve the indigent. The springs of national prosperity soon begin to flow again: work is plentiful, wages rise, and all is tranquillity and cheerfulness. I have seen England pass three or four times through such critical seasons as I have described. Through such seasons the United States will have to pass in the course of the next century, if not of this. How will you pass through them? I heartily wish you a good deliverance. But my reason and my wishes are at war, and I can not help foreboding the worst. It is quite plain that your government will never be able to restrain a distressed and discontented majority. For with you the majority is the government, and has the rich, who are always a minority, absolutely at its mercy. The day will come when in the State of New York a multitude of people, none of whom has had more than half a breakfast, or expects to have more than half a dinner, will choose a Legislature. Is it possible to doubt what sort of a Legislature will be chosen? On one side is a statesman preaching patience, respect for vested rights, strict observance of public faith. On the other is a demagogue ranting about the tyranny of capitalists and usurers, and asking why any body should be permitted to drink Champagne and to ride in a carriage while thousands of honest folks are in want of necessities. Which of the two candidates is likely to be preferred by a working-man who hears his children cry for more bread? I seriously apprehend that you will, in some such season of adversity as I have described, do things which will prevent prosperity from returning; that you will act like people who should in a year of scarcity devour all the seed-corn, and thus make the next a year not of scarcity, but of absolute famine. There will



be, I fear, spoliation. The spoliation will increase the distress. The distress will produce fresh spoliation. There is nothing to stop you. Your Constitution is all sail and no anchor. As I said before, when a society has entered on this downward progress, either civilization or liberty must perish. Either some Caesar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth, with this difference, that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged the Roman Empire came from without, and that your Huns and Vandals will have been engendered within your country by your own institutions.

Thinking thus, of course I can not reckon Jefferson among the benefactors of mankind. I readily admit that his intentions were good and his abilities considerable. Odious stories have been circulated about his private life; but I do not know on what evidence those stories rest, and I think it probable that they are false or monstrously exaggerated. I have no doubt that I shall derive both pleasure and information from your account of him.

I have the honor to be, dear Sir, your faithful servant,  
T. B. MACAULAY.

HOLLY LODGE, KENSINGTON,  
October 9, 1858

SIR,—I beg you to accept my thanks for your volumes, which have just reached me, and which, as far as I can judge from the first hasty inspection, will prove both interesting and instructive.

Your book was preceded by a letter, for which I have also to thank you. In that letter you expressed, without the smallest discourtesy, a very decided dissent from some opinions which I have long held firmly, but which I should never have obtruded on you except at your own earnest request, and which I

have no wish to defend against your objections. If you can derive any comfort as to the future destinies of your country from your conviction that a benevolent Creator will never suffer more human beings to be born than can live in plenty, it is a comfort of which I should be sorry to deprive you. By the same process of reasoning one may arrive at many very agreeable conclusions, such as that there is no cholera, no malaria, no yellow fever, no negro slavery, in the world. Unfortunately for me, perhaps, I learned from Lord Bacon a method of investigating truth diametrically opposite to that which you appear to follow. I am perfectly aware of the immense progress which your country has made and is making in population and wealth. I know that the laborer with you has large wages, abundant food, and the means of giving some education to his children. But I see no reason for attributing these things to the policy of Jefferson. I see no reason to believe that your progress would have been less rapid, that your laboring people would have been worse fed or clothed or taught, if your government had been conducted on the principles of Washington and Hamilton. Nay, you will, I am sure, acknowledge that the progress which you are now making is only a continuation of the progress which you have been making ever since the middle of the seventeenth century, and that the blessings which you now enjoy were enjoyed by your forefathers who were loyal subjects of the kings of England. The contrast between the laborer of New York and the laborer of Europe is not stronger now than it was when New York was governed by noblemen and gentlemen commissioned under the English great seal. And there are at this moment dependencies of the English crown in which all the phenomena which you attribute to purely democratical institutions may be seen in the

highest perfection. The colony of Victoria, in Australia, was planted only twenty years ago. The population is now, I suppose, near a million. The revenue is enormous. . . . The wages of labor are higher than they are even with you. Immense sums are expended on education. And this is a province governed by the delegate of a hereditary sovereign. It therefore seems to me quite clear that the facts which you cite to prove the excellence of purely democratic institutions ought to be ascribed not to those institutions, but to causes which operated in America long before your Declaration of Independence, and which are still operating in many parts of the British Empire. You will perceive, therefore, that I do not propose, as you thought, to sacrifice the interests of the present generation to those of remote generations. It would, indeed, be absurd in a nation to part with institutions to which it is indebted for immense present prosperity from an apprehension that, after the lapse of a century, those institutions may be found to produce mischief. But I do not admit that the prosperity which your country enjoys arises from those parts of your polity which may be called, in an especial manner, Jeffersonian . . .

With repeated thanks for your present, I have the honor to be, Sir, your faithful servant,  
MACAULAY.

HOLLY LODGE, KENSINGTON,  
January 8, 1859.

SIR,—I owe you many thanks for the amusement and information which I have derived from your *Life of Jefferson*; and I am much more inclined to pay that debt than to trouble you with criticism and controversy. In truth, the work of criticism and controversy would be interminable.

I did not know, till I read your book, that the odious imputations which have often been thrown on Jeffer-

son's private character originated with that vile fellow Callender. In the absence of evidence I supposed them, as I told you, to be either wholly false or grossly exaggerated; and I certainly shall not be more disposed to believe them because they rest on Callender's authority.

I again beg you to accept my thanks for much pleasure and much instruction, and believe me, Your faithful servant,  
MACAULAY.

FROM THE "EDITOR'S  
EASY CHAIR"

The letters of Lord Macaulay which are published in this number of the Magazine are exceedingly interesting and very characteristic. Many years ago, in his pleasant home at Cortland, in New York, Mr. Randall read them to the Easy Chair, and commented upon them with the warmth of a sincere and half-disdainful American. It was in the days when sincere and disdainful Americans were inclined to believe that we were the chosen people, and that the Divine hand would enable us to pass dry-shod through the sea. Nothing, indeed, could be imagined more antagonistic to all Macaulay's convictions and prejudices than a thorough Jeffersonian. First and last and always Macaulay was a British Whig. His political opinions were formed in the still lingering shade of the French Revolution, which effectually terrorized the educated class in England. The people and the mob were synonymous, in the Whig view, and a popular government was a more or less ameliorated rule of the Convention, which might any day become a bloody triumph rate. The key of these letters of Macaulay is invincible distrust of the great masses of men. It is the general feeling of conservatism everywhere and as the plain tendency of political progress is to re- place the government upon the popular will, conservatism anticipates anarchy and universal lapse into chaos.



# LAST COURTESIES

A story by Ella Leffland

**L**ILLIAN, you're too polite," Vladimir kept telling her.

She did not think so. Perhaps she was not one to return shoves in the bus line, but she did fire off censorious glares; and, true, she never yelled at the paper boy who daily flung her *Chronicle* to a rain-soaked fate, but she did beckon him to her door and remind him of his responsibilities. If she was always the last to board the bus, if she continued to dry out the paper on the stove, that was the price she must pay for observing the minimal courtesies the world owed itself if it was not to go under. Civilized she was. Excessively polite, no.

In any case, even if she had wanted to, she could not change at this stage of life. Nor had Aunt Bedelia ever changed in any manner. Not that she really compared herself to her phenomenal aunt, who, when she had died four months ago at the age of ninety-one, was still a captivating woman; no faded great beauty (the family ran to horse faces), but elegant, serenely vivid. Any other old lady who dressed herself in long gowns circa 1910 would have appeared a mere oddity; but under Bedelia's antiquated hairdo sat a brain; in her gnarled, almond-scented fingers lay direction. She spoke of Bach, of the Russian novelists, of her garden and the consolations of nature; never of her arthritis, the fallen ranks of her friends, or the metamorphosis of the neighborhood, which now featured motorcycles roaring alongside tin cans and blackened banana peels. At rare moments a sigh escaped her lips, but who knew if it was for her crippled fingers (she had been a consummate pianist) or a repercussion from the street? It was bad form, ungallant, to put too fine a point on life's discomfitures.

Since Bedelia's death the flat was lonely; lonely yet no longer private, since a supremely kinetic young woman, herself a music lover, had moved in upstairs. With no one to talk to, with thuds and acid rock resounding from above, Lillian drifted (too often, she knew) into the past, fingering its high points. The day, for instance, that Vladimir had entered their lives by way of the Steinway grand (great gleaming relic of better times) which he came to tune. He had burst in, dressed not

in a customary suit but in garage mechanic's overalls and rubber thong sandals, a short square man with the large disheveled head of a furious gnome, who embellished his labors with glorious run-throughs of Bach and Scarlatti, but whose speech, though a dark bog of Slavic intonations, was distinctly, undeniably obscene. Aunt Bedelia promptly invited him to dinner the following week. Lillian stood astonished, but reminded herself that her aunt was a sheltered soul unfamiliar with scabrous language, whereas she, Lillian, lived more in the great world, riding the bus every day to the Opera House, where she held the position of switchboard operator (Italian and German required). The following morning at work, in fact, she inquired about Vladimir.

Several people there knew of him. A White Russian, he had fled to Prague with his parents in 1917, then fled again twenty years later, eventually settling in San Francisco, where he quickly earned the reputation of an excellent craftsman and a violent crackpot. He abused clients who had no knowledge of their pianos' intestines, and had once been taken to court by an acquaintance whom he had knocked down during a conversation about Wagner. He wrote scorching letters of general advice to the newspapers; with arms like a windmill he confronted mothers who allowed their children to drop potato chips on the sidewalk; he kept a bucket of accumulated urine to throw on dog-walkers who were unwary enough to linger with their squatting beasts beneath his window. He had been institutionalized several times.

That night Lillian informed her aunt that Vladimir was brilliant but unsound.

The old woman raised an eyebrow at this. "For instance," Lillian pursued, "he is actually known to have struck someone down."

"Why?" Her aunt's voice was clear and melodious, with a faint ring of iron.

"It was during a conversation about Wagner. Apparently he disapproves of Wagner."

Her aunt gave a nod of endorsement.

"The man has even had himself committed, aunt. Several times, when he felt he was getting out of hand."

The old woman pondered this. "It shows foresight," she said at length, "and a ser-

*in San Francisco. She is the author of two novels, Mrs. Munch and Love out of Season.*





*From Victorian Photographs of Famous Men and Fair Women by Julia Margaret Cameron.  
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of social responsibility."

Lillian was silent for a moment. Then she pointed out: "He said unspeakable things here."

"They are mutually exclusive terms."

"Let us call them obscenities, then. You may not have caught them."

The old woman rose from her chair and arranged the long skirt of her dove-gray ensemble, "Lillian, one must know when to turn a deaf ear."

"I am apparently not in the know," Lillian said dryly.

"Perhaps it is an instinct." And suddenly she gave her unique smile, which was quite yellow (for she retained her own ancient teeth) but completely beguiling, and added: "In any case, he is of my own generation, Lillian. That counts for a great deal."

"He can't be more than sixty, aunt."

"It is close enough. Anyway, he is quite wrinkled. Also, he is a man of integrity."

"How can you possibly know that?"

"It is my instinct." And gently touching her niece's cheek, she said goodnight and went to her room, which peacefully overlooked the back garden, away from the street noises.

Undressing in her own smaller room, Lillian reflected, not for the first time, that though it was Bedelia who had remained unwed—Lillian herself having been married and widowed during the war—it was she, Lillian, who felt more the old maid, who seemed more dated, in a stale, fusty way, with her tight 1950s hairdo, her plain wool suits and practical support stockings . . . but then, she led a practical life . . . it was she who was trampled in the bus queue and who sat down to a hectic switchboard, who swept the increasingly filthy sidewalk and dealt with the sullen butcher and careless paper boy—or tried to . . . it seemed she was a middlewoman, a hybrid, too worldly to partake of aunt's immense calm, too seclusive to sharpen herself on the changing ways . . . aunt had sealed herself off in a lofty, gracious world; she lived for it, she would have died for it if it came to that . . . but what could she, Lillian, die for? . . . she was in nowhere, she thought, climbing into bed, and thirty years from now she would not have aged into the rare creature aunt was—last survivor of a fair, legendary breed, her own crimped hairdo as original as the Edwardian pouf, her boxy suits as awesome as the floorweeping gowns—no, she would just be a peculiar old leftover in a room somewhere. For aunt was grande dame, bluestocking, and virgin in one, and they didn't make that kind anymore; they didn't make those eyes anymore, large, hooded, a deep glowing violet.

It was a hue that had passed. . . . And she closed her own eyes, of candid, serviceable gray, said the Lord's Prayer, and prepared to act as buffer between her elite relative and the foul-mouthed old refugee.

**A**UNT BEDELIA PREPARED the dinner herself, taking great pains; then she creaked into her wet garden with an umbrella and picked her finest blooms for a centerpiece; and finally, over the knobbed, arthritic joint of her ring finger, she twisted a magnificent amethyst usually reserved for Christmas, Easter, and Bach's birthday. These touches Lillian expected to be lost on their wild-eyed guest, but Vladimir kissed the festive hand with a cavalier click of his sandals, acknowledged the flowers with a noisy inhalation of his large, hairy nostrils, and ate his food with admirable if strained refinement. During coffee he capsized his cup, but this was only because he and Bedelia were flying from Bavarian spas and Italian sea resorts to music theory, Turgenev, and God knew what else—Lillian could hardly follow—and then, urged by aunt, he jumped from the table, rolled up the sleeves of his overalls, and flung himself into Bach, while aunt, her fingers stiffly moving up and down on her knee, threw back her head and entered some region of flawless joy. At eleven o'clock Vladimir wrestled into his red lumber jacket, expressed his delight with the evening, and slapped down the steps to his infirm 1938 Buick. Not one vulgar word had escaped his lips.

Nor in the seven following years of his friendship with Bedelia was this precedent ever broken. Even the night when some drunk sent an empty pint of muscatel crashing through the window, Vladimir's respect for his hostess was so great that all scurrility was plucked from his wrath. However, when he and Lillian happened to be alone together he slipped right back into the belching, offensive mannerisms for which he was known. She did not mention this to her aunt, who cherished the idea that he was very fond of Lillian.

"You know how he detests opera," the old lady would assure her, "and yet he has never alluded to the fact that you work at the Opera House and hold the form in esteem."

"A magnanimous gesture," Lillian said, smiling.

"For Vladimir, yes."

And after a moment's thought, Lillian had to agree. Her aunt apparently understood Vladimir perfectly, and he her. She wondered if this insight was due to their shared social origins, their bond of elevated interests, or

**"The couple thrived, sometimes sitting up till midnight with their sherry and sheet music, sometimes motoring into the countryside and then winding homeward along the darkening sea."**



their more baroque twinhood of eccentricity. Whatever it was, the couple thrived, sometimes sitting up till midnight with their sherry and sheet music, sometimes, when the Buick was well, motoring (Bedelia's term) into the countryside and then winding homeward along the darkening sea, in a union of perfect silence, as the old lady put it.

Bedelia died suddenly, with aplomb, under Toscanini's direction. Beethoven's Ninth was on the phonograph; the chorus had just scaled the great peak before its heart-bursting cascade into the finale; aunt threw her head back to savor the moment, and was gone.

The next morning Lillian called Vladimir. He shrieked, he wept, he banged the receiver on the table; and for ten days, helpless and broken, he spent every evening at the home of his departed love while Lillian, herself desolated, tried to soothe him. She felt certain he would never regain the strength to insult his clients again, much less strike anyone to the ground, but gradually he mended, and the coarseness, the irascibility flooded back, much worse than in the past.

For Bedelia's sake—of that Lillian was sure—he forced himself to take an interest in her welfare, which he would express in eruptions of advice whenever he telephoned. "You want to lead a decent life, Lillian, you give them hell! They sell you a bad cut of meat, throw it in the butcher's face! You get shortchanged, make a stink! You're too soft! Give them the finger, Lillian!"

"Yes, of course," she would murmur.

"For your aunt I was a gentleman, but now she's gone, who appreciates? A gentleman is a fool, a gentleman's balls are cut off! I know how to take care of myself, I am in an armored tank! And you should be too. Or find a protector. Get married!"

"Pardon?" she asked.

"Marry!"

"I have no desire to marry, Vladimir."

"Desire! Desire! It's a world for your desires? Think of your scalp! You need a protector, now Bedelia's gone!"

"Aunt was not my protector," she said patiently.

"Of course she was! And mine too!"

Lillian shifted her weight from one foot to the other and hoped he would soon run down.

"You want to get off the phone, don't you? Why don't you say, Vladimir get the shit off the phone, I'm busy! Don't be a doormat! Practice on me or you'll come to grief! What about that sow upstairs, have you given her hell yet? No, no, of course not! Jesus bleeding Christ, I give up!" And he slammed the receiver down.

LILLIAN HAD IN FACT complained. Allowing her new neighbor time to settle in, she had at first endured—through apparently rugless floorboards—the girl's music, her door slams, her crashing footfall which was a strange combination of scurry and thud, her deep hollow brays of laughter and shrieks of "You're kidding!" and "Fantastic!"—all this usually accompanied by a masculine voice and tread (varying from night to night, Lillian could not help but notice) until finally, in the small hours, directly above Bedelia's room, where Lillian now slept, ears stuffed with cotton, the night was crowned by a wild creaking of bedsprings and the racketing of the headboard against the wall. At last, chancing to meet her tormentor on the front steps (she was not the Amazon her noise indicated, but a small, thin creature nervously chewing gum with staccato snaps), Lillian decided to speak; but before she could, the girl cried: "Hi! I'm Jody—from upstairs?" with a quick, radiant smile that heartened the older woman in a way that the hair and hemline did not. Clad in a tiny, childish dress that barely reached her hip sockets, she might have been a prematurely worn twenty or an adolescent thirty—dark circles hung beneath the eyes and a deep line was etched between them, but the mouth was babyish, sweet, and the cheeks a glowing pink against the unfortunate mane of brassy hair, dark along its uneven part.

Having responded with her own name (the formal first and last) Lillian paused a courteous moment, then began: "I'm glad to have this opportunity of meeting you; I've lived in this flat for twenty-four years, you see..." But the eyes opposite, heavily outlined with blue pencil, were already wandering under this gratuitous information. Brevity was clearly the password. "The point is"—restoring attention—"I would appreciate it if you turned down your music after ten P.M. There is a ruling."

"It bugs you?" the girl asked, beginning to dig turbulently through a fringed bag, her gum snaps accelerating with the search.

"Well, it's an old building, and of course if you don't have carpets..." She waited to be corroborated in this assumption, but now the girl pulled out her house key with fingers whose nails, bitten to the quick, were painted jet black. Fascinated, Lillian tried not to stare. "Not to worry," the girl assured her with the brief, brilliant smile, plunging the key into the door and bounding inside, "I'll cool it."

"There's something else, I'm afraid. When that door is slammed—"



# OF ALL THE THINKING THAT WENT INTO VOLVO, THIS IS WHAT WE THOUGHT OF MOST.

*These days, you find a lot of car makers copying each other's designs.  
In building a Volvo, we're more influenced by yours.*





Ella Leffland  
LAST  
COURTESIES

But the finely arched brows rose with pre-occupation; the phone was ringing down from the top of the stairs. "I dig, I dig. Look, hon, my phone's ringing." And closing the door softly, she thundered up the stairs.

After that the phonograph was lowered a little before midnight, but nothing else was changed. Lillian finally called the landlord, a paunchy, sweating man whom she rarely saw, and though she subsequently observed him disappearing into his unruly tenant's flat several evenings a week, the visits were apparently useless. And every time she met the girl, she was greeted with an insufferable "Hi! Have a nice day!"

Unfortunately, Lillian had shared some of her vexation with Vladimir, and whenever he dropped by—less to see her, she knew, than to replenish his memories of Bedelia—his wrath grew terrible under the commotion. On his last visit his behavior had frightened her. "Shut up!" he had screamed, shaking his fist at the ceiling. "Shut up, bitch! Whore!"

"Vladimir, please—this language, just because Bedelia's not here."

"Ah, Bedelia, Bedelia," he groaned.

"She wouldn't have tolerated it."

"She wouldn't have tolerated *that*! Hear the laugh—hee haw, hee haw! Braying ass! Bedelia would have pulverized her with a glance! None of this farting around you go in for!" His large head had suffused with red, his hands were shaking at his sides. "Your aunt was a genius at judging people—they should have lined up the whole fucking rotten city for her to judge!"

"It seems to me that you have always appointed yourself as judge," Lillian said, forcing a smile.

"Yah, but Vladimir is demented, you don't forget? He has it down in black and white! Ah, you think I'm unique, Lillian, but I am one of the many! I am in the swim!" He came over to her side and put his flushed head close, his small intense eyes piercing hers.

"You read yesterday about the girl they found in an alley not far from here, cut to small bits? Slash! Rip! Finito! And you ask why? Because the world, it is demented! A murder of such blood not even in the headlines and you ask why? Because it is commonplace! Who walks safe on his own street? It is why you need a husband!"

Lillian dropped her eyes, wondering for an embarrassed moment if Vladimir of all people could possibly be hinting at a marital alliance. Suddenly silent, he pulled a wadded handkerchief from his pocket with trembling fingers and wiped his brow. He flicked her a

suspicious glance. "Don't look so coy. I'm not in the running. I loathe women—sticky! Full of rubbishy talk!" And once more he threw his head back and began bellowing obscenities at the ceiling.

"It's too much, Vladimir—please! You're not yourself!"

"I *am* myself!"

"Well then, I'm not. I'm tired, I have a splitting headache—"

"You want me to go! Be rude, good! I have better things to do anyway!" And his face still aflame, he struggled into his lumber jacket and flung out the door.

**T**HAT NIGHT HER SLEEP was not only disturbed by the noise, but by her worry over the violence of Vladimir's emotions. At work the next day she reluctantly inquired about her friend, whose antics were usually circulated around the staff but seldom reached her cubicle. For the first time in years, she learned, the weird little Russian had gone right over the edge, flapping newspapers in strangers' faces and ranting about the end of civilization; storming out on tuning jobs and leaving his tools behind, then furiously accusing his clients of stealing them. The opinion was that if he did not commit himself soon, someone else would do it for him.

On the clamorous bus home that night shoved as usual into the rear, Lillian felt an overwhelming need for Bedelia, for the sound of that clear, well-modulated voice that had always set the world to rights. But she opened her door on silence. She removed her raincoat and sat down in the living room with the damp newspaper. People at work told her she should buy a television set—such a good companion when you lived alone—but she had too long scorned that philistine invention to change now. For that matter, she seldom turned on the radio, and even the newspaper—she ran her eyes over the soggy turn of the front page—even the newspaper distressed her. Vladimir was extreme, but he was right: everything was coming apart. Sitting there, she thought she could hear the world's madness—its rudeness, its litter, its murders—beat against the house with the rain. And suddenly she closed her eyes under an intolerable longing for the past: for the peaceful years she had spent in these rooms with Bedelia; and before that, for the face of her young husband, thirty years gone now and for even earlier days . . . odd, but it never seemed to rain in her youth, the great campus filled the air with dizzying sweetness.



she remembered running across the lawns for no reason but that she was twenty and the sun would shine forever. . . .

She gave way to two large tears. Shaken, yet somehow consoled, and at the same time ashamed of her self-indulgence, she went into the kitchen to make dinner. But as she cooked her chop she knew that even this small measure of comfort would be destroyed as soon as her neighbor came banging through the door. Already her neck was tightening against the sound.

But there was no noise at all that night, not until one A.M. when the steady ring of the telephone pulled her groggily from bed.

"Listen, you'll kill me—it's Jody, I'm across the bay, and I just flashed on maybe left the stove burners going."

"Who?" Lillian said, rubbing her eyes, Jody? How did you get my number?"

"The phone book, why? Listen, the whole dump could catch fire, be a doll and check out? The back door's unlocked."

Lillian felt a strange little rush of gratitude—that her name, given to such seemingly indifferent ears on the steps that day, had been remembered. Then the feeling was replaced by anger; but before she could speak, the girl said, "Listen, hon, thanks a million," and hung up.

Clutching her raincoat around her shoulders, beaming a flashlight before her, Lillian nervously climbed the dark back stairs to her neighbor's door and let herself into the kitchen. Turning on the light, she stood aghast at what she saw: not flames licking the wall, for the burners were off, but grimed linoleum, piled garbage, a sink of stagnant water. On the puddled table, decorated with a jar of withered, long-dead daisies, sat a greasy portable television set and a pile of dirty laundry in a litter of cigarette butts, sodden pieces of paper, and the congealed remains of spare ribs. Hesitating, ashamed of her peepiness, she peered down at the pieces of paper: bills from department stores, including Saks and Magnin's; scattered food stamps; handwritten notes on binder paper, one of which read "Jamie honey theres a piza in the freezer I love U"—then several big hearts—"Jody." A long brown bug—a cockroach?—was crawling across the note, and now she noticed another one climbing over a spare rib. As she stood cringing, she heard rain pouring through an open window somewhere, shaking a shade into frenzies. Going to the bedroom door, which stood ajar, she beamed her flashlight in and switched on the light. Under the window a large puddle was forming on the floor, which was rugless as she

had suspected, though half carpeted by strewn clothes. The room was furnished only with a bed whose convulsed, mummy-brown sheets put her in mind of a pesthouse, and a deluxe television set in a rosewood cabinet; but the built-in bookcase was well stocked, and, having shut the window, she ran her eyes over the spines, curious. Many were cheap paperback thrillers, but there was an abundance of great authors: Dostoevsky, Dickens, Balzac, Melville. It was odd, she puzzled, that the girl had this taste in literature, yet could not spell the simplest word and had never heard of a comma. As she turned away, her eardrums were shattered by her own scream. A man stood in the doorway.

**A** BOY, ACTUALLY, she realized through her fright; one of Jody's more outstanding visitors, always dressed in one of those Mexican shawl affairs and a battered derby hat, from under which butter-yellow locks flowed in profusion, everything at the moment dripping with rain. More embarrassed now than frightened—she had never screamed in her life, or stood before a stranger in her nightgown, and neither had Bedelia—she began pulsating with dignity. "I didn't hear anyone come up the stairs," she indicted him.

"Little cat feet, man," he said with a cavernous yawn, "Where's Jody? Who're you?"

She explained her presence, pulling the raincoat more firmly together across her bosom, but unable to do anything about the expanse of flowered flannel below.

"Jody, she'd forget her ass if it wasn't screwed on," the boy said with a second yawn. His eyes were watery and red, and his nose ran. "If you'll excuse me," she said, going past him. He followed her back into the kitchen and suddenly, with a hostlike warmth that greatly surprised her, he asked, "You want some coffee?"

She declined, saying that she must be going.

At this he heaved a deep, disappointed sigh, which again surprised her, and sank like an invalid into a chair. He was a slight youth with neat little features crowded into the center of his face, giving him, despite his woe-begone expression, a pert, fledgling look. In Lillian's day he would have been called a "pretty boy." He would not have been her type at all; she had always preferred the lean profile.

"My name's Jamie," he announced suddenly, with a childlike spontaneity beneath the film of languor; and he proffered his

**"Jamie, Jody, the kinds of names you would give pet rabbits. Where were the solid, straightforward names of yesteryear—the Georges and Harolds, the Dorothys and Margarets?"**



hand.

Gingerly, she shook the cold small fingers. "Hey, really," he entreated, "Stay and rap awhile."

"Rap?"

"Talk, man. Talk to me." And he looked, all at once, so lonely, so forlorn, that even though she was very tired, she felt she must stay a moment longer. Pulling out a chair, she took a temporary, edge-of-the-seat position across the hideous table from him.

He seemed to be gathering his thoughts together. "So what's your bag?" he asked.

She looked at him hopelessly. "My bag?"

"You a housewife? You work?"

"Oh—yes, I work," she said, offended by his bold curiosity, yet grateful against her will to have inspired it.

"What's your name?" he asked.

He was speaking to her as a contemporary; and again, she was both pleased by this and offended by his lack of deference. "Lillian . . . Cronin," she said uncertainly.

"I'm Jamie," he sighed.

"So you mentioned." And she thought—Jamie, Jody, the kinds of names you would give pet rabbits. Where were the solid, straightforward names of yesteryear—the Georges and Harolds, the Dorothys and Margarets? What did she have to say to a Jamie in a Mexican shawl and threadbare derby who was now scratching himself all over with little fidgety movements? But she said, breaking the long silence, which he seemed not to notice: "And what is *your* bag, if I may ask?"

He took several moments to answer. "I don't know, man . . . I'm a student of human nature."

"Oh? And where do you study?"

"Not me, man, that's Jody's scene . . . into yoga, alpha waves, the whole bit . . . even studies macramé and world lit at jay cee . . ."

"Indeed? How interesting. I noticed her books."

"She's a towering intellect." He yawned, his eyes glassy with fatigue. He was scratching himself more slowly now.

"And does she work, as well?" Lillian asked, once more ashamed of her nosiness.

"Work?" he smiled. "Maybe you could call it that. . . ." But his attention was drifting away like smoke. Fumbling with a bread-knife, he picked it up and languidly, distantly, speared a cockroach with the point. Then, with the side of the knife, he slowly, methodically, squashed the other one.

Averting her eyes from the massacre, Lillian leaned forward. "I don't mean to sound

familiar, but you seem a quiet person. Do you think you might ask Jody to be a little less noisy up here? I've spoken to the landlord, but—" She saw the boy smile again, an odd, rueful smile that made her feel, for some reason, much younger than he. "You see—" she continued, but he was fading from her presence, slowly mashing his bugs to pulp and now dropping the knife to reach over and click on the food-spattered television set. Slouched, his eyes bored by what the screen offered, he nevertheless began following an old movie. The conversation appeared to be over.

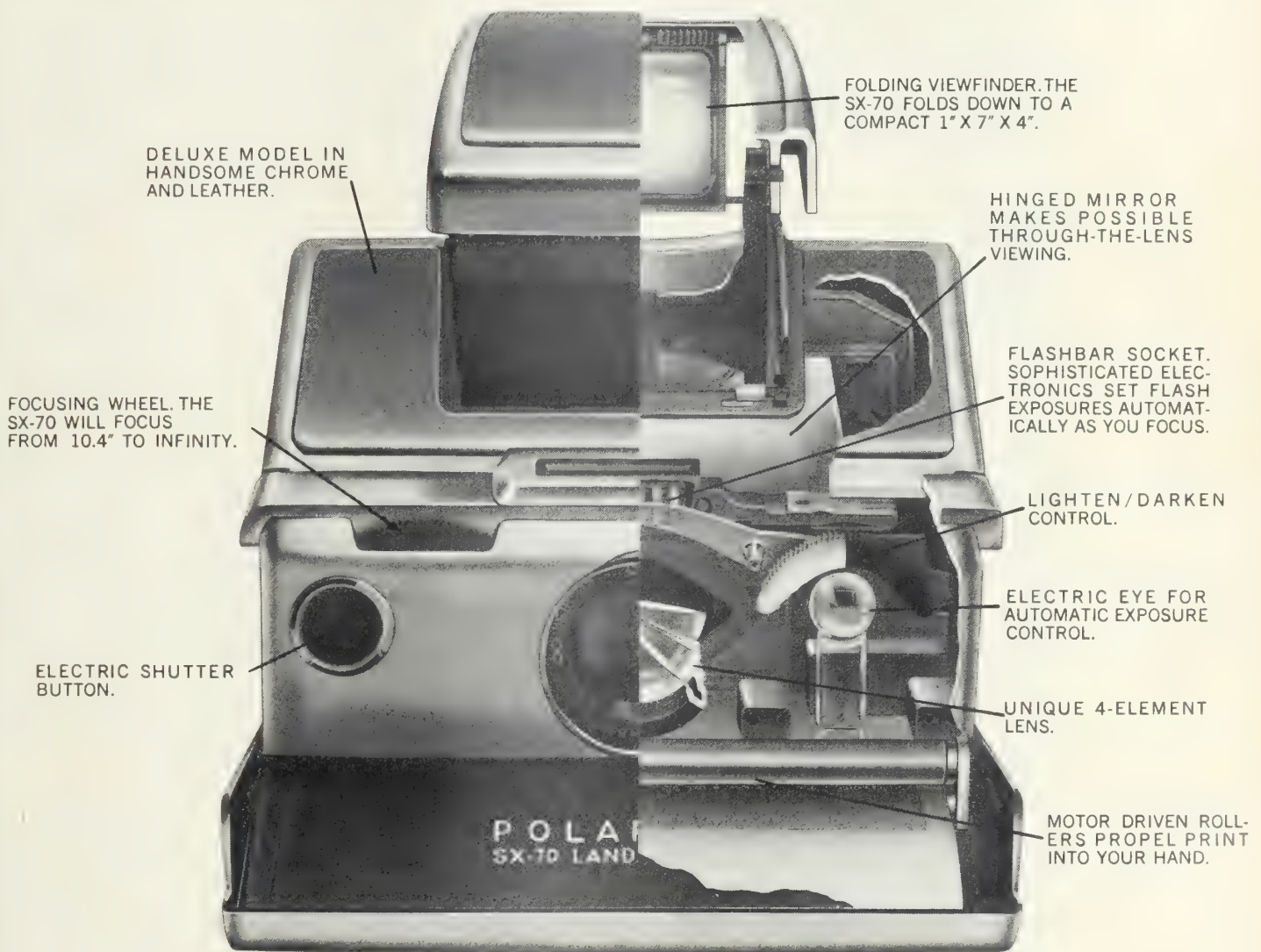
Lillian rose. She was not accustomed, nor would Bedelia have been, to a chat ending without some mutual amenity. She felt awkward, dismissed. With a cool nod she left him and descended the splashing stairs to her own flat. Such a contrast the youth was of warmth and rudeness . . . and Jody, an illiterate studying Dostoevsky at college . . . food stamps lying hugger-mugger with bills from Saks . . . it was impossible to bring it all into focus; she felt rudderless, malfunctioning . . . how peculiar life had become . . . everything mixed up . . . a generation of fragments. . . .

Climbing heavily back into bed, she wondered what Bedelia would have thought of Jody and Jamie. And she remembered how unkempt and disconcerting Vladimir had been, yet how her aunt had quickly penetrated to the valuable core while she, Lillian, fussed on about his bad language. No doubt Bedelia would have been scandalized by the filth upstairs, but she would not have been so narrow-souled as to find fault with spelling mistakes, first names, taste in clothing. . . . Bedelia might not have pulverized Jody with a glance, as Vladimir suggested, but instead seen some delicate tragedy in the worrier cherubic features, or been charmed by the girl's invincible buoyancy . . . it was hard to tell with Bedelia, which facet she might consider the significant one . . . she often surprised you . . . it had to do with largeness of spirit. . . .

Whereas she, Lillian, had always to guard against stuffiness. . . . Still, she tried to hold high the torch of goodwill . . . too pompous a simile, of course, but she knew clearly and deeply what she meant . . . so *let* Vladimir rave on at her for refusing to shrink into a knot of hostility; what was Vladimir, after all, insane. Her eyes opened in the dark as she faced what she had tried to avoid all day that Vladimir had been wrenched off the tracks by Bedelia's death, and that this time he felt no need to commit himself. Without



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Ella Leffland  
LAST  
COURTESIES

question it was Lillian's duty to enlighten him. But she winced at the thought . . . such a terrible thing to have to tell someone . . . if only she could turn to Bedelia . . . how sorely she missed her . . . how sorely she missed George's lean young face under his Army cap . . . youth . . . sunlight . . . outside the rain still fell . . . she had only herself, and the dark, unending rain . . .

"Stop this brooding," she said aloud; if she had only herself, she had better be decent company. And closing her eyes she tried to sleep. But not until a gray watery dawn was breaking did she drop off.

**T**HE OPERA HOUSE TELEPHONED at three minutes past nine. Leaden, taut-nerved, sourly questioning the rewards of her long, exquisite punctuality, she pulled on her clothes, and, with burning eyes and empty stomach, hurried out of the house. At work, though the board was busy, the hours moved with monumental torpor. She felt increasingly unlike herself, hotly brimming over with impatience for all this switchboard blather: calls from New York, Milan; Sutherland with her sore throat, Pavarotti with his tight schedule—did they really think that, if another *Rigoletto* were never given, anyone would notice? She felt an urge to slur this fact into the headphone, as befitted a truant traipsing in at a quarter to ten, as befitted someone with minimally combed hair and crooked seams and, even worse, with the same underwear on that she had worn the day before. As if a slatternly, cynical Lillian whom she didn't recognize had squeezed slyly into prominence, a Lillian who half-considered walking out on the whole tiresome business and indulging in a lavish two-hour lunch downtown—let someone else serve, let someone else be polite.

Sandwiched into the bus aisle that night, she almost smacked an old gentleman who crunched her right instep under his groping heel; and as she creaked into the house with her wet newspaper and saw that a motorcyclist had been picked off on the freeway by a sniper, she had to fight down a lip curl of satisfaction. Then, reflectively, still in her raincoat, she walked to the end of the hall where an oval mirror hung, and studied her face. It was haggard, flinty, stripped of faith, scraped down to the cold, atavistic bones of retaliation. She had almost walked off her job, almost struck an old man, almost smiled at murder. A feeling of panic shot through her; what were values if they could collapse at the touch of a sleepless night? And she

sank the terrible face into her hands; but a ray of rational thought lifted it again. "Almost." Never mind the querulous inner tremble, at each decisive moment her principles had stood fast. Wasn't a person entitled to an occasional fit of petulance? There is such a thing as perspective, she told herself, and in the meantime a great lust for steam and soap had spread through her. She would scrub out the day in a hot bath and in perfect silence, for apparently Jody had not yet returned from across the bay. God willing, the creature would remain away a week.

Afterward, boiled pink, wrapped in her quilted robe, she felt restored to grace. A fine appetite raced through her, along with visions of a tuna casserole which she hurried into the kitchen to prepare, hurrying out again at the summons of the telephone. It was Vladimir, very excited, wanting to drop by. Her first response was one of blushing discomfort: entertain Vladimir in her quilted bathrobe? Her second she articulated: she was bone-tired, she was going to bed right after dinner. But even as she spoke she heard the remorseless door slam of Jody's return, and a violent spasm twisted her features. "Please—next week," she told Vladimir and hung up, clutching her head as tears of rage and exhaustion burst from her eyes. Weeping, she made a tuna sandwich, chewed it without heart, and sank onto her unmade bed. The next morning, still exhausted, she made an emergency appointment with her doctor, and came home that night with a bottle of sleeping pills.

By the end of the week she was sick with artificial sleep, there was an ugly rubber taste in her mouth, her eye sockets felt caked with rust. And it was not only the noise and pills that plagued her: a second neighborhood woman had been slashed to death by the rain man (the newspapers, in their cozy fashion, had thus baptized the slayer). She had taken to beaming her flashlight under the bed before saying the Lord's Prayer; her medicinal sleep crackled with surreal visions; at the sullen butcher's her eyes were morbidly drawn to the meat cleaver; and at work not only had she upset coffee all over her lap, but she disconnected Rudolf Bing himself in the middle of a sentence.

And never any respite from above. She had called the landlord again, without audible results, and informed the Board of Health about the cockroaches; their reply was that they had no jurisdiction over cockroaches. She had stuck several notes under Jody's door pleading with her to quiet down, and had stopped her twice on the steps, re-



ceiving the first time some capricious remark, and the second a sigh of "Christ, Lilly, I'm trying. What d'you want?" Lilly! The gall! But she was gratified to see that the gum-snapping face was almost as sallow as her own, the circles under the eyes darker than ever, new lines around the mouth. So youth could crumble, too. Good! Perhaps the girl's insanely late hours were boomeranging, and would soon smash her down in a heap of deathlike stillness (would that Lillian could implement this vision). Or perhaps it was her affair with Jamie that was running her ragged. Ah, the costly trauma of love! Jealousy, misunderstanding—so damaging to the poor nervous system! Or so she had heard . . . she and George had been blessed with rapport . . . but try not to dwell on the past . . . yes, possibly it was Jamie who was lining the girl's face . . . Lillian had seen him a few times since their first meeting, once on the steps—he smiled, was pleasant, remembered her, but had not remembered to zip his fly, and she had hurried on, embarrassed—and twice in the back garden, where on the less frenching days she tended Bedelia's flowers, but without her aunt's emerald-green thumb . . . a rare sunny afternoon, she had been reaking off geraniums; Jody and Jamie lay on the grass in skimpy bathing suits, their thin bodies white, somehow poignant in their delicacy . . . she felt like a great stuffed mattress in her sleeveless dress, soiled hands masculine with age, a stevedore's drop of sweat hanging from her nose . . . could they imagine her once young and tender on her own bed of love? or now, with a man friend? As everything closed down at fifty-seven, like a bankrupt hotel!—tearing off the head of a geranium—brash presumption of youth! But she saw that they weren't even aware of her, no, they were kissing and rolling about . . . in Bedelia's garden! "Here, what are you doing!" she cried, but in the space of a moment a hostile little flurry had taken place, and now they broke away and lay separately in charged silence, still taking no notice of her as she stood there, heart thumping, fists clenched. She might have been air. Suddenly, back from the heat, she had plodded inside.

The next time she saw Jamie in the garden was this afternoon when, arriving home from work and changing into a fresh dress for Vladimir's visit, she happened to glance out her bedroom window. Rain sifted down, but the boy was standing still, a melancholy sight, wrapped in a theatrical black cloak, the derby and Mexican shawl apparently having outlived their effectiveness as eyecatchers . . . youth's eternal and imbecile need to

shock . . . Jody with her ebony fingernails and silly prepubescent hemlines; and this little would-be Dracula with his golden sausage curls, tragically posed in the fragile mist, though she noticed his hands were untragically busy under the cloak, scratching as usual . . . or . . . the thought was so monstrous that she clutched the curtain . . . he could not be standing in the garden abusing himself; she must be deranged, suffering prurient delusions—she, Lillian Cronin, a decent, clean-minded woman . . . ah God, what was happening, what was happening? It was her raw nerves, her drugged and hanging head, the perpetual din . . . even as she stood there, her persecutor was trying on clothes, dropping shoes, pounding from closet to mirror (for Lillian could by now divine the activity behind each noise) while simultaneously braying into the telephone receiver stuck between chin and shoulder, and sketchily attending the deluxe television set, which blared a hysterical melodrama . . .

Outside, the youth sank onto a tree stump, from which he cast the upstairs window a long bleak look . . . they must have had a lovers' quarrel, and the girl had shut him out; now he brooded in the rain, an exile; or rather a kicked puppy, shivering and staring up with ponderous woe . . . then, eyes dropping, he caught sight of Lillian, and a broad, sunny, candid smile flashed from the dismal countenance . . . odd, jarring, she thought, giving a polite nod and dropping the curtain, especially after his rude imperviousness that hot day on the grass . . . a generation of fragments, she had said so before, though God knew she never objected to a smile (with the exception of Jody's grimace) . . . and walking down the hall away from the noise, she was stopped woodenly by the sound of the girl's doorbell. It was one of the gentlemen callers, who tore up the stairs booming felicitations which were returned with the inevitable shrieks, this commingled din moving into the front room and turning Lillian around in her tracks. With the door closed, the kitchen was comparatively bearable, and it was time to eat anyway. She bought television dinners now, lacking the vigor to cook. She had lost seven pounds, but was not growing svelte, only drawn. Even to turn on the waiting oven was a chore. But slowly she got herself into motion, and at length, pouring out a glass of burgundy to brace herself for Vladimir's visit, she sat down to the steaming, neatly sectioned pap. Afterward, dutifully washing her glass and fork in the sink, she glanced out the window into the rain, falling in sheets now; the garden

**"A feeling of panic shot through her; what were values if they could collapse at the touch of a sleepless night?"**



was dark and she could not be sure, but she thought she saw the youth still sitting on the stump. It was beyond her, why anyone would sit still in a downpour . . . but everything was beyond her, insurmountable . . . and soon Vladimir would arrive . . . the thought was more than she could bear, but she could not defer his visit again, it would be too rude . . .

**H**E BURST IN like a cannonball, tearing off his wet lumber jacket, an acrid smell of sweat blooming from his armpits; his jaws were stubbled with white, great bushes sprouted from his nostrils.

"You look terrible!" he roared.

Even though she had at the last moment rubbed lipstick into her pallid cheeks. She gave a deflated nod and gestured toward the relatively quiet kitchen, but he wanted the Bedelia-redolent front room, where he rushed over to the Steinway and lovingly dashed off an arpeggio, only to stagger back with his finger knifed up at the ceiling. "Still the chaos!" he cried.

"Please—" she said raggedly. "No advice, I beg of you."

"No advice? Into your grave they'll drive you, Lillian!" And she watched his finger drop, compassionately it seemed, to point at her slumped bosom with its heart beating so wearily inside. It was a small hand, yet blunt, virile, its back covered with coarse dark hair . . . what if it reached farther, touched her? . . . But spittle already flying, Vladimir was plunging into a maelstrom of words, obviously saved up for a week. "I wanted to come sooner, why didn't you let me? Look at you, a wreck! Vladimir knew a second one would be cut—he smells blood on the wind! He wants to come and pound on your door, to be with you, but no, he respects your wish for privacy, so he sits every night out front in his auto, watching!" Here he broke off to wipe his lips, while Lillian, pressing hard the swollen, rusty lids of her eyes, accepted the immense duty of guiding him to confinement. "And every night," he roared on, "While Vladimir sits, Bedelia plays 'Komm, Jesu, Komm,' it floats into the street, it is beautiful, beautiful—"

"Ah, Vladimir," broke pityingly from her lips.

Silence. With a clap of restored lucidity his fist struck his forehead. It remained tightly glued there for some time. When it fell away he seemed quite composed.

"I have always regretted," he said crisp-

ly, "That you resemble the wrong side of your family. All you have of Bedelia is a most vague hint of her cheekbones." Which he was scrutinizing with his small glittering eyes. Again, nervously, she sensed that he would touch her; but instead, a look of revulsion passed over his features as he stared first at one cheek, then the other. "You've got fucking gunk on! Rouge!"

With effort, she produced a neutral tone. "I'm not used to being stared at, Vladimir."

"Hah, I should think not," he snapped abstractedly, eyes still riveted.

Beast! Vile wretch! But at once she was shamed by her viciousness. From where inside her did it come? And she remembered that terrible day at work when a malign and foreign Lillian had pressed into ascendancy, almost as frightening a character change as the one she was seeing before her now, for Vladimir's peering eyes seemed actually black with hatred. "Stinking whore-rouge," he breathed, then with real pain, he cried: "Have you no thought for Bedelia? You have the blessing of her cheekbones! Respect them! Don't drag them through the gutter! My God, Lillian! My God!"

She said nothing. It seemed the only thing to do.

But now he burst forth again, cheerfully rubbing his hands together. "Listen to Vladimir. You want a husband, forget the wa-paint, use what you have. Some intelligence! A good bearing—straighten the shoulders—and cooking talent. Not like Bedelia's, but not bad. Now, Vladimir has been looking around for you—"

"Vladimir," she said through her teeth.

"—and he has found a strong, healthy widower of fifty-two years, a great enjoyer of the opera. He has been advised of your virtues—"

"Vladimir!"

"Of course you understand Vladimir himself is out, Vladimir is a monolith—" A particularly loud thump shuddered the ceiling and he jumped back yelling, "Shove it, you swine! Lice!"

"Vladimir, I do not want a man!" Lillian snapped.

"Not so! I sense sex boiling around you!"

Her lips parted; blood rushed into her cheeks to darken the artificial blush. For certain, with that short, potent word, *sex*, her hands would leap on her.

"But you look a thousand years old," he went on, "It hangs in folds, your face. You must get rid of this madhouse upstairs! What have you done so far—not even told the lan-



ord!"

"I *have!*" she cried; and suddenly the thought of confiding in someone loosened a tingling flood of tears from her eyes, and she sank into a chair. "He has come to speak to me . . . time and time again . . . he seems always to be there . . . but nothing changes. . . ."

"Ah, so," said Vladimir, pulling out his gray handkerchief and handing it to her. "The low screws him."

She grimaced both at the words and the reprehensible cloth, with which she nevertheless dabbed her eyes. "I don't believe that," she said nasally.

"Why not? She's a prostitute. Only to look at her."

"You've seen her?" she asked, slowly raising her eyes. But of course, if he sat outside in his car every night . . .

"I have seen her," he said, revulsion hardening his eyes. "I have seen much. Even a fat-man with the face of a sorrowful kewpie doll. He pines this minute on the front steps."

"That's her boyfriend," Lillian murmured, increasingly chilled by the thought of Vladimir sitting outside all night, spying.

"Boyfriend! A hundred boyfriends she has, each with a roll of bills in his pocket!"

Tensely, she smoothed the hair at her temples. "Forgive me, Vladimir," she said gently, "But you exaggerate. You exaggerate everything, I'm afraid. I must point this out to you, because I think it does you no good. Really—"

"Don't change the subject! We're talking about her, upstairs!"

She was silent for a moment. "The girl is too free, I suppose, in our eyes. But I'm certain that she isn't what you call her."

"And how do you come to this idiot conclusion?" he asked scornfully.

She lifted her hands in explanation, but they hung helplessly suspended. "Well," she said at last, "I know she reads Dostoevsky . . . she takes courses . . . and she cares for that boy in the cape, even if they do have their quarrels . . . and there's a quality of anguish in her face . . ."

"Anguish! I call it the knocked-out look of a female cretin who uses her ass every night to pay the rent. And that pea-brain boyfriend outside, in his secondhand ghoulish costume to show how interesting he is! Probably he pops pills and lives off his washerwoman mother, if he hasn't slit her throat in fit of irritation! It's the type, Lillian! Weak, no vision, no guts! The sewers are vomiting them up by the thousands to mix with us!

They surround us! Slop! Shit! Chaos! Listen to that up there! Hee-haw! Call that anguish? Even pleasure? No, I tell you what it is! Empty, hollow noise—like a wheel spun into motion and never stopped again! It's madness! The madness of our times!"

But as he whipped himself on, Lillian felt herself growing diametrically clear and calm, as if the outburst were guiding her blurred character back into focus. When he stopped, she said firmly, "Yes, I understand what you mean about the wheel spinning. There is something pointless about them, something pitiful. But they're not from a sewer. They're people, Vladimir, human beings like ourselves . . ."

"Ah, blanket democracy! What else would you practice but that piss-fart abomination?"

"I practice what Bedelia herself practiced," she replied tartly.

"Ah," he sighed, "The difference between instinct and application. Between a state of grace and a condition of effort. Dear friend Lillian, tolerance is dangerous without insight. And the last generation with insight has passed, with the things it understood. Like the last generation of cobblers and glass stainers. It is fatal to try to carry on a dead art—the world has no use for it! The world will trample you down! Don't think of the past, think of your scalp!"

"No," she stated, rising and swaying with the lightheadedness that so frequently visited her now. "To live each moment as if you were in danger—it's demeaning. I will not creep around snarling like some four-legged beast. I am a civilized human being. Your attitude shows a lack of proportion, Vladimir; I feel that you really—"

A flash of sinewy hands; her wrists were seized and crushed together with a stab of pain through whose shock she felt a marginal heat of embarrassment, a tingling dismay of abrupt intimacy. Then the very center of her skull was pierced by his shriek. "You *are* in danger! Can't you see!" and he thrust his face at hers, disclosing the red veins of his eyes, bits of sleep matted in the lashes, and the immobile, overwhelmed look of someone who has seen the abyss and is seeing it again. Her heart gave the chop of an axe; with a wail she strained back.

His fixed look broke; his eyes grew flaring, kinetic. "One minute the blood is nice and cozy in its veins—the next, slice! and slice! and slice! Red fountains go up—a festival! Worthy of Handel! Oh marvelous, marvelous! The rain man—" Here he broke off to renew his grip as she struggled frantically to pull away. "The rain man, he's in ecstasies!

**"Listen to that up there! Hee-haw! Call that anguish? Even pleasure? No, I tell you what it is! Empty, hollow noise—like a wheel spun into motion and never stopped again!"**



Ella Leffland  
LAST  
COURTESIES

Such founts and spouts, such excitement! Then at last it's all played out, nothing but puddles, and off he trots, he's big success! And it's big city—many many fountains to be had, all red as—as—red as—

Her laboring wrists were flung aside; his hands slammed against her face and pressed fiercely into the cheeks.

"Vladimir!" she screamed, "It's Lillian—Lillian!"

The flared eyes contracted. He stepped back and stood immobile. Then a self-admonishing hand rose shakily to his face, which had gone the color of pewter. After a long moment he turned and walked out of the house.

**S**HE BLUNDERED TO THE DOOR and locked it behind him, then ran heavily back into the front room where she came to a blank stop, both hands pressed to her chest. Hearing the sound of an engine starting, she wheeled around to the window and pinched back the edge of the shade. Through the rain she saw the big square car jerk and shudder, while its motor rose to a crescendo of whines and abruptly stopped. Vladimir climbed out and started back across the pavement. Her brain finally clicked: the telephone, the police.

With long strides she gained the hall where the telephone stood, and where she now heard the anticipated knock—but mild, rueful, a diminished sound that soon fell away. She moved on haltingly; she would call the police, yes—or a friend from work—or her doctor—someone, anyone, she must talk to someone, and suddenly she stumbled with a cry: it was Vladimir's lumber jacket she had tripped over, still lying on the floor where he had dropped it, his wallet sticking out from the pocket. Outside, the Buick began coughing once more, then it fell silent. A few moments later the shallow, timid knock began again. Without his wallet he could not call a garage, a taxi. It was a fifteen-block walk to his house in the rain. If only she could feel Bedelia's presence beside her, look to the expression in the intelligent eyes. Gradually, concentrating on those eyes, she felt an unclenching inside her. She gazed at the door. Behind it Vladimir was Vladimir still. He had spoken with horrifying morbidity, and even hurt her wrists and face, but he was not the rain man. Bedelia would have seen such seeds. He had been trying to warn her tonight of the world's dangers, and in his passion had set off one of his numerous obsessions—with her fingertip she touched the rouged and aching oval

of her cheek. Strange, tortured soul who had stationed himself out in the cold, night after night, to keep her from harm. Bending down she gathered up the rough, homely jacket, but the knocking had stopped. She went back into the front room and again tweaked aside the shade. He was going away, a small dehydrated figure, already drenched. Now he turned the corner and was lost from sight. Depleted, she leaned against the wall.

It might have been a long while that she stood there, that the noise from above masked the sound, but by degrees she became aware of knocking. He must have turned around in the deluge and was now, with what small hope, tapping on the door again. She hesitated, once more summoning the fine violet eyes, the tall brow under its archaic coiffure which dipped in an affirmative nod. The jacket under her arm, Lillian went into the hall, turned on the porch light, and unlocked the door.

It was not Vladimir who stood there, but Jamie, as wet as if he had crawled from the ocean, his long curls limply clinging to the foolish cape, his neat little features stamped with despair, yet warmed, saved, by the light of greeting in his eyes. Weary, unequal to any visit, she shook her head.

"Jody?" she thought she heard him say, or more likely it was something else—the rain muffled his voice; though she caught an eerie, unnatural tone that she now sensed was reflected in the luminous stare. With a sudden feeling of panic she started to slam the door in his face. But she braked herself knowing that she was overwrought; it was unseemly to use such brusqueness on the lost creature because of her jangled nerves.

So she paused for one haggard, courteous moment to say, "I'm sorry, Jamie, it's late—some other time." And in that moment the shrouded figure crouched, and instantaneously, spasmlike, rushed up against her. She felt a huge but painless blow, followed by a dullness, a stillness deep inside her, and staggering back as he kicked the door shut behind them, she clung to the jamb of the front-room entrance and slowly sank to her knees.

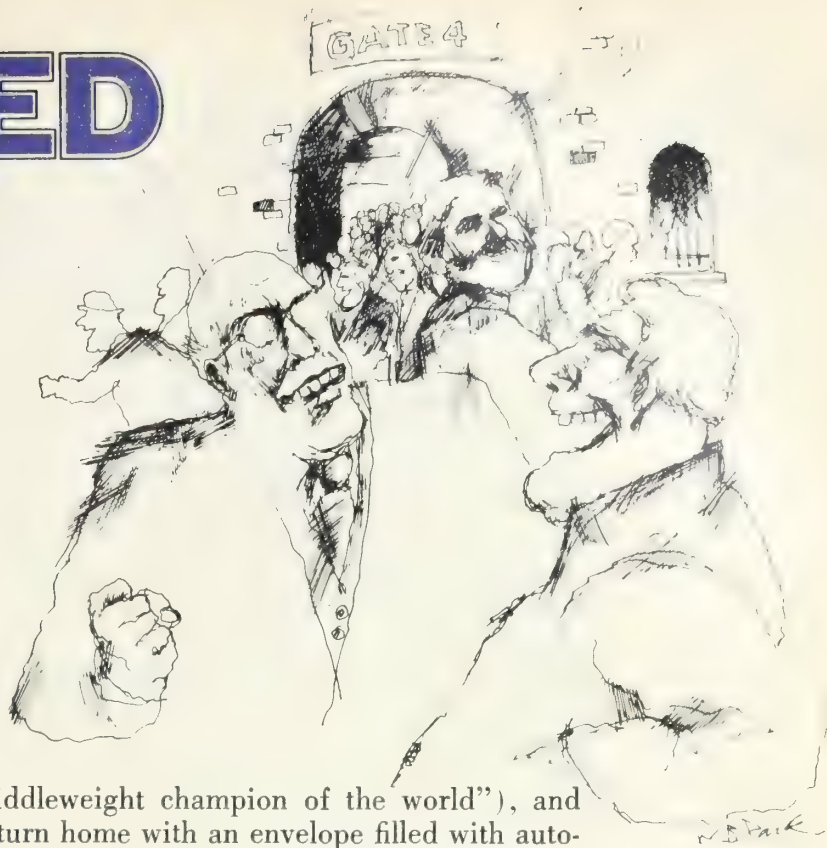
She dimly comprehended the wet clothes brushing her side, but it was the room that held her attention, that filled her whole being. It had grown immense, lofty, and was suffused with violet, overwhelmingly beautiful. But even as she watched, it underwent a rapid wasting, paled to the faint, dead-lighthead hue of an old tintype; and now it vanished behind a sheet of black as the knife was wrenched from her body.



# OBSESSED WITH SPORT

On the interpretation of a fan's dreams

by Joseph Epstein



I CANNOT REMEMBER when I was not surrounded by sports, when talk of sports was not in the air, when I did not care passionately about sports. As a boy in Chicago in the late Forties, I lived in the same building as the sister and brother-in-law of Barney Ross, the welterweight champion. Half a block away, down near the lake, the Sullivan High School football team worked out in the spring and autumn. Summers the same field was given over to baseball and men's softball on Sundays. A few blocks to the north was the Touhy Avenue Fieldhouse, where basketball was played, and lifeguards trained, and behind which, in a softball field frozen over in winter, crack-the-whip, hockey, and speed skating took over. To the west, a block or so up Morse Avenue, was the Morse Avenue "L" Recreations, a combined pool hall and bowling alley. Life, in short, was games.

My father had no interest in sports. He had grown up, one of the ten children of Russian Jewish immigrant parents, on tough Notre Dame Street in Montreal, where the major sports were craps, poker, and petty larceny. He left Montreal at seventeen to come to Chicago, where he worked hard and successfully so that his sons might play. Two of his boyhood friends from Notre Dame Street, who had the comic-book names of Sammy and Danny Spunt, had also come to Chicago, where they bought the Ringside Gym on Dearborn Street in the Loop. All the big names worked out at Ringside for their Chicago fights: Willie Pep, Tony Zale, Joe Louis. At eight or nine I would take the El downtown to the Ringside, be introduced around by Danny Spunt ("Tony Zale, I'd like you to meet the son of an old friend of mine. Kid, I'd like you to meet the

middleweight champion of the world"), and return home with an envelope filled with autographed 8-by-10 glossies of Gus Lesnevich, Tammy Mauriello, Kid Gavilan, and the wondrous Sugar Ray.

I lived on, off, and in sports. *Sport* magazine had recently begun publication, and I gobbled up its issues cover to cover, soon becoming knowledgeable not only about the major sports—baseball, football, and basketball—but about golf, hockey, tennis, and horse racing, so that I scored reputably on the Sport Quiz, a regular department at the front of the magazine. Another regular department was the Sport Classic, which featured longish profiles of the legendary figures in the history of sports: Ty Cobb, Jim Thorpe, Bobby Jones, Big Bill Tilden, Red Grange, Man o' War. I next moved on to the sports novels of John R. Tunis—*All-American*, *The Iron Duke*, *The Kid from Tomkinsville*, *The Kid Comes Back*, *World Series*, the lot—which I read with as much excitement as any books I have read since.

The time was, as is now apparent, a splendid era in sports. Ted Williams, Joe DiMaggio, and Stan Musial were afield; first Jack Kramer, then Pancho Gonzales, dominated tennis; George Mikan led the Minneapolis Lakers, and the Harlem Globetrotters could still be taken seriously; Doc Blanchard and Glen Davis, Mr. Inside and Mr. Outside, were playing for Army, Johnny Lujack was at Notre Dame; in the pros Sammy Baugh, Bob Waterfield, and Sid Luckman were the major T-formation quarterbacks; Joe Louis and Sugar Ray Robinson fought frequently; the two Willies, Mosconi and Hoppe, put in regular appearances at Bensinger's in the Loop; Eddie Arcaro seemed

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to ride three, four winners a day. Giants, it truly seemed, walked the earth.

**A**LL LEARNING OF CRAFT—which sport, like writing, most assuredly is—involves imitation, especially in the early stages; and I was an excellent mimic. By the time I was ten years old I had mastery over all the big-time moves: the spit in the mitt, the fluid infield chatter, the knocking of dirt from the spikes; the rhythmic barking out of signals, hands high under the center's crotch to take the ball; the three bounces and deep breath before shooting the free throw (on this last, I regretted not being a Catholic, so that I might be able to make the sign of the cross before shooting, as was then the fashion among Catholic high-school and college players). I went in for athletic haberdashery in a big way, often going beyond mimicry to the point of flat-out phoniness—wearing, for example, a knee pad while playing basketball, though my knees were always, exasperatingly, intact.

I always looked good, which was important, because form is intrinsic to sports; but in my case it was doubly important, because the truth is that I wasn't really very good. Or at any rate not good enough. Two factors accounted for this. The first was that, without being shy about body contact, I lacked a certain indispensable aggressiveness; the second, connected closely to the first, was that, when it came right down to it, I did not care enough about winning. I would rather lose a point attempting a slashing cross-court backhand than play for an easier winner down the side; the long jump shot always had more allure for me than the safer drive to the basket. Given a choice between the two vanities of winning and looking good, I almost always preferred looking good.

I shall never forget the afternoon, sometime along about my thirteenth year, when, shooting baskets alone, I came upon the technique

for shooting the hook. Although today it has nowhere near the consequence of the jump shot—an innovation that has been to basketball what the jet has been to air travel—the hook is still the single most beautiful shot in the game. The rhythm and grace of it, the sway of the body off the pivot, the release of the ball behind the head and off the fingertips, the touch and instinct involved in its execution, make the hook altogether a balletic thing, and to achieve it is to feel one of the most delectable sensations in sports. That afternoon, on a deserted side street, shooting on a rickety wooden backboard and a black rim without a net, I felt it and grew nearly drunk on the feeling. Rain came down, dirt washed in the gutters, flecks of it spattering my clothes and arms and face, but, soaked and cold though I was, I do not think I would have left that basket on that afternoon for anything. I threw up hook after hook, from every angle, from farther and farther out, off the board, without the board, and hook after hook went in. Only pitch darkness drove me home.

I do not say that not to have shot the hook is never to have lived, but only that, once having done so, the pleasure it gives is not so easily forgotten. Every sport offers similar pleasures, the pleasures taken differing by temperament: the canter into the end zone to meet a floating touchdown pass, or the clean, crisp feel of a perfect block or tackle; the long straight drive or the precisely played approach shot to the green; the solid overhead; the pick-up on the tricky short hop or the long ball down one of the power alleys. Different sports, different pleasures. But so keen are these pleasures—pleasures of execution, of craft completed—that, along with being unforgettable, they are also worth recapturing in any available way, and the most available way, when reflexes have slowed, when muscle no longer responds so readily to brain, is from the grandstand or, perhaps more often nowadays, from the chair before the television.

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### Pleasures of the spectator

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**I**HAVE PUT IN DAYS on the bench, but years in my chair before the television set. Recently it has occurred to me that over the years I have heard more hours of talk from the announcer Curt Gowdy than from my own father, who is not a reticent man. I have been thoroughly Schenkeled, Mussbergered, Summeralled, Cosselled, DeRogotissed, and Garagiolaed. How many hundreds—thousands?—of hours have I spent watching sports of all sorts, either at parks or stadiums or over





television? I am glad I shall never have a precise answer. Yet neither apparently can I get enough. What is the fascination? Why is it that, with the prospect of a game to watch in the evening or on the weekend, the day seems lighter and brighter? What do I get out of it?

What I get out of it, according to one fairly prominent view, is an outlet for my violent emotions. Knee-wrenching, rib-cracking, head-busting, this view has it, is what sports are really about, with sports fans being essentially sadists, and cowardly sadists at that, for they take their violence not at firsthand but at second remove. Enthusiasm for sports among Americans is little more than a reflection of the national penchant for violence. Military men talk about game plans; the long touch-down pass is called the bomb. The average pro-football fan, seeing a quarterback writhing on the ground at midfield as a result of the ministrations of Joe Green, Carl Eller, or Lyle Alzado, twitters with glee, finds his ultimate reward, and declares a little holiday in the blackest corner of his heart.

But this is a criticism that comes at sports by way of politics. To believe it one has to believe that the history of the United States is chiefly one of rape, expropriation, and aggressive imperialism. To dismiss it, however, one need only know something about sports. Violence is indubitably a part of some sports; in some—hockey is an example—it sometimes comes close to being featured. But in no sport—not even boxing, that most rudimentary of sports—is it the main item, and in many other sports it plays no part at all. A distinction worth insisting on is that between violence and roughness. Roughness, a willingness to mix it up, to take if need be an elbow in the jaw, is part of rebounding in basketball, yet violence is not. Even in pro football, most maligned of modern American sports, more of roughness than of violence is involved. Roughness raises the stakes, provides the pressure, behind execution. A splendid because true phrase has come about in pro football to cover the situation in which a pass receiver, certain that he will be tackled upon the instant he makes his reception, drops a ball he should otherwise have caught easily—the phrase, best delivered in a Southern accent such as Don Meredith's, is "He heard footsteps on that one, Howard." Although a part of the attraction, it is not so much those footsteps that fill the stands and the den chairs on Sunday afternoons as it is those men who elude them: the Lynn Swanns, the Fran Tarkentons, the O.J. Simpsons. The American love of violence theory really will not wash. Dick Butkus did not get us into Vietnam.

Many who would not argue that sports reflect American violence nevertheless claim that they imbue one with the competitive spirit. In some who are already amply endowed with it, sports doubtless do tend to refine (or possibly brutalize) the desire to win. Yet sports also teach a serious respect for craft. Competition, though it flourishes as always, is in bad odor nowadays; but craft, officially respected, does not flourish greatly outside the boutique.

**I**F THE LOVE OF VIOLENCE or the competitive urge does not put me in my chair for the countless games I watch, is it, then, nostalgia, a yearning to regain the more glowing moments of adolescence? Many argue that this is precisely so, that American men exist in a state of perpetual immaturity, suspended between boy- and manhood. "The difference between men and boys" says Liberace, "is the price of their toys." (I have paid more than \$300 for two half-season tickets to the Chicago Bulls games, parking fees not included.) Such unending enthusiasm for games may have something to do with adolescence, but little, I suspect, with regaining anything whatever. Instead, it has more to do with watching men do regularly

**"I have put in days on the bench, but years before the television set. I have heard more hours of talk from Curt Gowdy than from my own father, who is not a reticent man."**





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and surpassingly what, as an adolescent, one did often bumblingly though with an occasional flash of genius. To have played these games oneself as a boy or a young man helps immeasurably the appreciation that in watching a sport played at professional caliber one is witnessing the extraordinary made to look ordinary. That a game may have no consequence outside itself—no effect on history, on one's own life, on anything really—does not make it trivial but only makes the enjoyment of it all the purer.

The notion that men watch sports to regain their adolescence pictures them sitting in the stands or at home watching a game and, within their psyches, muttering, "There, but for the lack of grace of God, go I." And it is true that a number of contemporary authors who are taken seriously have indeed written about sports with a strong overlay of yearning. In the men's softball games described in the fiction of Philip Roth, center field is a place akin to Arcady. Arcadian, too, is the outfield in Willie Morris's memoir of growing up in the South, *North Toward Home*. In the first half of *Rabbit Run* John Updike takes up the life of a man whose days are downhill all the way after hitting his peak as a high-school basketball star—and in the writing Updike himself evinces a nice soft touch of undisguised longing. In *A Fan's Notes*, a book combining yearning and self-disgust in roughly equal measure, Frederick Exley makes plain that he would much prefer to have been born into the skin of Frank Gifford rather than into his own.

But most men who are enraptured by sports do not think any such thing. I should like to have Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's sky hook, but not, especially for civilian life, the excessive height that is necessary to its execution. I should like to have Jimmy Connors's ground strokes, but no part of his mind. These are men born with certain gifts, gifts honed by practice and determination, that I, and millions along with me, enjoy seeing on display. But the reality principle is too deeply ingrained, at least in a man of my years, for me to even imagine exchanging places with them. One might as well imagine oneself in the winner's circle at Churchill Downs as the horse.

Fantasy is an element in sports when they are played in adolescence—an alley basket becomes the glass backboard at Madison Square Garden, a concrete park district tennis court with grass creeping out of the service line becomes center court at Wimbledon—but fantasy of this kind is hard to come by. Part of this has to do with age; but as large a part has to do with the age in which we live. Sport has always been a business but never more so than

currently, and nothing lends itself less to fantasy than business. Reading the sports section has become rather like reading the business section—mergers, trades, salary negotiations, contract disputes, options, and strikes fill the columns. Along with the details of business, those of the psychological and social problems of athletes have come to the fore. The old *Sport* magazine concentrated on play on the field, with only an occasional digressive reference to personal life. ("Yogi likes plenty of pizza in the off-season and spends a lot of his time at his teammate Phil Rizzuto's bowling alley," is a rough facsimile of a sentence from its pages that I recall.) But the magazine in its current version, as well as the now more popular *Sports Illustrated*, expends much space on the private lives of athletes—their divorces, hang-ups, race relations, need for approval, concern for security, potted philosophies—with the result that the grand is made to seem small.

On the other side of the ledger, there is a view that finds a shimmering significance in everything having to do with sports. Literary men in general are notoriously to be distrusted on the subject. They dig around everywhere, and can be depended upon to find much treasure where none is buried. Norman Mailer mining metaphysical ore in every jab of Muhammad Ali's, an existential nugget in each of his various and profuse utterances, is a particularly horrendous example. Even the sensible William Carlos Williams was not above this sort of temptation. In a poem entitled "At the Ball Game," we find the lines "It is the Inquisition, the/Revolution." Dr. Williams could not have been much fun at the ball park.

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### The real thing

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**I**F ENTHUSIASM FOR SPORTS has little to do with providing an outlet for violent emotions, regaining adolescence, discovering metaphysical truths, the Inquisition or the Revolution, then what, I ask myself, am I doing past midnight, when I have to be up at 5:30 the next morning, watching on television what will turn out to be a seventeen-inning game between the New York Mets and the St. Louis Cardinals? The conversation coming out of my television set is of a very low grade, even for sports announcing. But even the dreary talk cannot put me off—the rehash of statistics, the advice to youngsters to keep their gloves low when in the field, the thin jokes. Neither the Mets nor the Cards figure to be contenders this year. The only



possible effect that this game can have on my life is to make me dog-tired the next day. Yet I cannot pull myself away. I want to know how it is going to end. True, the score will be available in the morning paper. But that is not the same thing. What is going on here?

One thing that is going on is the practice of craft of a very high order, which is intrinsically interesting. But something as important is involved, something rarer in contemporary life, the spectacle of which gives enormous satisfaction. To define this satisfaction negatively, it is the absence of fraudulence and fakery. No small item, this, when one stops to think that in nearly every realm of contemporary life fraud and fakery have an established—some would say a preponderant—place. Advertising, politics, business, and journalism are only the most obvious examples. Fraud seems similarly pervasive in modern art: in painters whose reputations rest on press agency; in writers who write one way and live quite another; in composers who are taken seriously but whose work cannot be seriously listened to. At a time when *image* is one of the most frequently used words in American speech and writing, one does not too often come upon the real thing.

Sport may be the toy department of life, but one of its abiding compensations is that, at least on the field, it is the real thing. Much has been done in recent years in the attempt to ruin sport—the ruthlessness of owners, the greed of players, the general exploitation of fans. But even all this cannot destroy it. On the court, down on the field, sport is fraud-free and fakeproof. With a full count, two men on, his team down by one run in the last of the eighth, a batter (as well as a pitcher) is beyond the aid of public relations. At match point at Forest Hills a player's press clippings are of no help. Last year's earnings will not sink a twelve-foot putt on the eighteenth at Augusta. Alan Page, galloping up along a quarterback's blind side, figures to be neglectful of that quarterback's image as a swinger. In all these situations, and hundreds of others, a man either comes through or he doesn't. He is alone out there, naked but for his ability, which counts for everything. Something there is that is elemental about this, and something greatly satisfying.

Another part of the satisfaction to be got from sports—from playing them, but also from watching them being played—derives from their special clarity. Sports offer clarity of a kind sufficient to engage the most serious minds. That the Cambridge mathematician G. H. Hardy closely followed cricket and avidly read cricket scores is not altogether sur-

prising. Numbers in sports are ubiquitous. Scores, standings, averages, times, records—comfort is found in such numbers. ERA, RBIs, FGP, pass completions, turnovers, category upon category of statistics are kept for nearly every aspect of athletic activity. (Why, I recently heard someone ask, are records not kept for catchers throwing out runners attempting to steal? Because, the answer is, often runners steal on pitchers, and so it would be unfair to charge these stolen bases against catchers.) As perhaps in no other sphere, numbers in sports tell one where things stand. No loopholes here, where figures, for once, do not lie. Nowhere else is such specificity of result available.

Clarity about character is also available in sports. "You Americans hold to the proposition that it is self-evident that all men are created equal," I not long ago heard an Englishman say, adding, "it had better be self-evident, for no other evidence for it exists." Sport coldly demonstrates physical inequalities—there are the larger, the faster, the stronger, the more graceful athletes—but it also throws up human types who have devised ways to redress these inequalities. One such type is the hustler. In every realm but that of sports the word *hustle* is pejorative, whereas in sports it is approbative. Two of the hustler breed, Pete Rose of the Cincinnati Reds and Jerry Sloan of the Chicago Bulls, are men who supplement reasonably high levels of ability with unreasonably high levels of courage and desire. Other athletes—Joe Morgan and Oscar Robertson come to mind—bring superior athletic intelligence to bear upon their play. And Bill Russell, late of the Boston Celtics, who if the truth be known was not an inherently superior athlete, blended hustle and intelligence with

**"That a game may have no consequence outside itself does not make it trivial but only makes the enjoyment of it all the purer."**



W. B. Park



Joseph Epstein  
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what abilities he did have and through force of character established supremacy.

Whence do hustle, intelligence, and character in sports derive, especially since they apparently do not necessarily carry over into life? Joe DiMaggio and Sugar Ray Robinson, two of the most instinctively intelligent and physically elegant athletes, brought little of either of these qualities over into their business or personal activities. Some athletes can do all but one important thing well: Wilt Chamberlain at the free-throw line, for those who recall his misery there, leaves a permanent picture of a mental block in action. Other athletes—Connie Hawkins, Ilie Nastase, Dick Allen—have all the physical gifts in superabundance, yet, because of some insufficiency of character, some searing flaw, never come near to fulfilling their promise. Coaches supply yet another gallery of human types, from the fanatical Vince Lombardi to the comical Casey Stengel to the measured and aptly named John Wooden. The cast of characters in sport, the variety of situations, the complexity of behavior it puts on display, the overall human exhibit it offers—together these supply an enjoyment akin to that once provided by reading interminably long but inexhaustibly rich nineteenth-century novels.

**I**N A WIDER SENSE, sport is culture. For many American men it represents a common background, a shared interest. It has a binding power that transcends social class and education. Some years ago I found myself working in the South among men with whom I shared nothing in the way of region, religion, education, politics, or general views; we shared nothing, in fact, but sports, which was enough for us to get along and grow to become friends, in the process showing how superficial all the things that might have kept us apart in fact were. More recently, in Chicago, at a time when race relations were in a particularly jagged state, I recall emerging from an NBA game, in which the Chicago Bulls in overtime beat the Milwaukee Bucks, into a snowy night and an aura of common good feeling that, for a time, submerged the enmity between races; laughing, throwing snowballs, exuberant generally, the crowd leaving the Chicago Stadium that night was not divided by being black and white but unified by being Bull fans. Last year's Boston-Cincinnati World Series, one of the most gratifying in memory, coming hard upon a year of extreme political divisiveness, performed, however briefly, something of the same function. How much better it felt to agree about the

mastery of Luis Tiant than to argue about the wretchedness of Richard Nixon.

In sports as in life, character does not much change. I have recently begun to play a game called racquet ball, and I find I would still rather look good than win, which is what I usually do: look good and lose. I beat the rum-dums but go down before quality players. I get compliments in defeat. Men who beat me admire the whip of my strokes, my wrist action, my anticipation, the power I get behind the ball. When this occurs I feel like a woman who is complimented for the shape of her bottom when it is her mind she craves admiration for, though of course she will take what praise she can get.

R. H. Tawney, the great historian of religion and capitalism, once remarked that the only progress he could note during the course of his lifetime was in the deportment of dogs. For myself, I would say that the chief progress in the course of my lifetime has been in the quality and variety of athletic gear. Racquets made of metal, aluminum, wood, and fiberglass, balls of different colors, sneakers of all materials and designs, posh warm-up suits, tube socks, sweatbands for the head and wrist in various colors and pipings; only the athletic supporter, the old jockstrap, remains unornamented, but perhaps even now Vera or Peter Max is at the drawing board. In any event, with all this elegant plumage available, it is a nice time to be playing ball again.

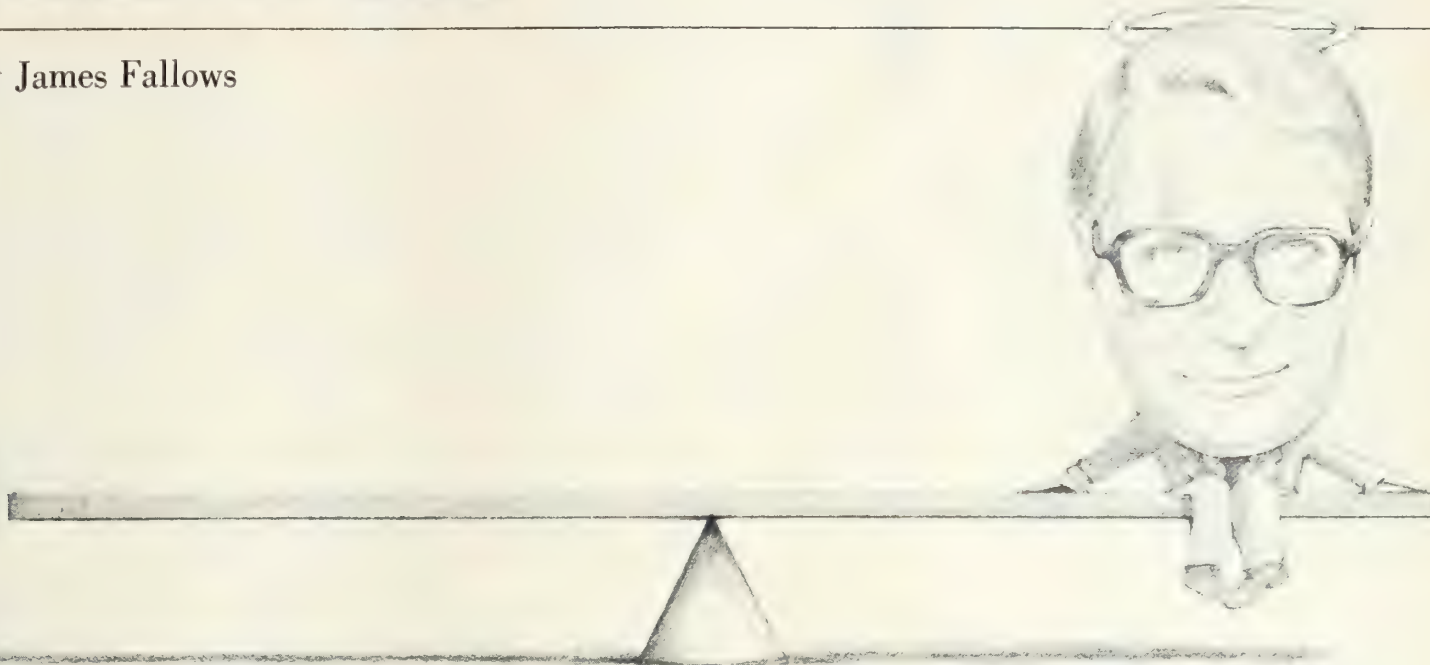
Sports can be impervious to age. My father-in-law, a man of style, seriousness, and great good humor who died a year ago in his late sixties, was born in South Bend, Indiana, and in his early manhood left the Catholic Church—two facts that conjoined to give him an intense interest in the fortunes of the teams from Notre Dame. He loved to see them lose. The torch has been passed on. I now love to see Notre Dame lose, and when it does I think of him and remember his smile.

When I was a boy I had a neighbor, a man who, after retirement, had a number of strokes. An old man and a young boy, we had in common a love of sports, which, when we met on the street, was our only topic of conversation. He once inspected a new glove of mine, and instructed me to rub it down with neat's-foot oil, place a ball firmly in the pocket, wrap string tightly around the glove, and leave it like that for the winter. I did, and it worked. After his last stroke but one, he seldom left his house. Afternoons he spent in a chair in his bedroom, a blanket over his lap, listening to Cub games over the radio. It was while listening to a ball game that he quietly died. I cannot imagine a better way. □



# GOVERNMENT-INSPECTED PLATITUDES

by James Fallows



**The Creative Balance: Government, Politics, and the Individual in America's Third Century**, by Elliot Richardson. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, \$12.95.

**W**HILE OUR Presidential candidates keep scrambling for the finish line, we might pause to consider one group of wistful onlookers. These are the men of "Presidential timber," that handful of respectable citizens who, though they would never go through the agony of running for the office, know that they deserve to be appointed, perhaps by God. John Gardner soaked in this reputation during much of the Sixties. From time to time he would propel himself even higher into the moral stratosphere by publishing books like *Excellence*, which everyone admired and no one read. His mantle has recently descended to Elliot Richardson, late our Ambassador to England and for the moment Secretary of Commerce, who now has a noble book of his own.

This is the same Richardson who was man of all work during the Nixon Administration, serving, between 1969 and 1974, as Under Secretary of State, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, Secretary of

Defense, and finally Attorney General. During the first few years of this period he embodied nothing more special than competence and respectability. By the end, when he had resigned as Attorney General rather than fire the Special Prosecutor, Archibald Cox, he had covered himself with valor and moral probity and become prime Presidential timber. At no point during this ascent was his reputation overcomplicated by fact, since almost no one knew anything about him. Apart from his one dramatic gesture, it was hard to get a purchase on the man.

Now Richardson himself has remedied the defect. Pensioned off to London, he met every Ambassador's toughest challenge—how to fill the time—by working on his book. From the public's point of view, this is clearly preferable to having him meddle in British politics or aggravate the cod war. But as the years go by Richardson may wish he had instead spent his time going to the Old Vic. *The Creative Balance*, intended as philosophy, apologia, and campaign biography all in one, does indeed bring us closer to Richardson than we ever were before, but I doubt that the effect of this intimate view is the one the author had hoped for.

**A**S FOR THE philosophy, the less said the better. Richardson's subject is "the cumulative forces threatening to submerge the dignity and self-esteem of the individual"; unoriginality and vapidness are his twin muses. One of Richardson's associates during the Nixon Administration used to say that while some men have an instinct for the jugular, his boss had an instinct for the capillary. This, it turns out, is also his forte as an author.

Beneath the broad canopy of his subject, Richardson has assembled nearly every Serious Issue you have heard of in the last ten years. From the imbalance between Congress and the Executive, to the limits to growth, to the miseries of the workplace, and on and on, they are all here. With his arsenal assembled, Richardson proceeds to fire off a series of duds, with conclusions such as this one, about policies of "reverse discrimination": "And yet, on balance, affirmative action has, I think, been a qualified success." He is less forthright when it comes to ways of making assembly-line work less tedious. "And so, at last, I come to the one firm conviction that I mentioned at the beginning of this discussion: it is that the subject is too new for final judgments."



There is nothing rash, or unworthy, or mean-spirited about his ruminations. Some of them even make sense. But the reader spends half his time trying desperately to figure out what Richardson is saying, and the other half realizing that it's all been said better many times before. The argumentative style varies between vignettes from Richardson's past—which provide most of the "facts" and all of the interest in the book—and a Great Books-style compendium of the wisdom of the ages. When coupled with the author's unrelieved high-mindedness, they can produce pure bathos, as in the following passage.

*For my part, I firmly believe that the satisfaction of serving, like that of sharing and giving, flows from a basic attribute of the human condition: the inseparability of the individual from other persons. The "self" does not—cannot—exist in isolation. During my senior year at Harvard College, I was working on an honors thesis in philosophy, and I had to try to think through the meaning of the concept of "self." At an intense stage of this effort, needing to clear my head, I went for a walk around the block. It was one of those slaty, late-winter afternoons with a wet wind, not very cold. As I walked, it struck me that no person's identity can be defined in all its essential uniqueness except in terms of others: family, friends, teachers, fellow workers, other members of the same community and the same cultural heritage. We exist in the midst of a web of interconnecting relationships to other people, some of whom are close, others more remote, but none completely disconnected. To be a complete person is to be a part of them. This is what we mean by love. This is why sharing is natural. If it were not for our physical separateness—no one else can eat for me or walk for me or see from the same eyes—we would more clearly perceive our psychic interdependence.*

*Hegel had anticipated me, as I later learned, by several generations. But so, for that matter, had John Donne.*

There is something admirable about Richardson's determination to figure all these things out for himself, and his thoughts are not that much more banal than what the rest

of us might mutter to ourselves. The decision to publish is harder to defend.

**T**HE REVELATIONS the book does bring, through its anecdotes and asides, are about the inner man. They present a quite distinct portrait, not of a statesman or leader of the masses, but of the perfect technocrat. The term is less insulting than it may seem. Along with people who decide in which direction to aim the mighty machinery of government, we also need those who know how to shift the gears. These people are technocrats, and Richardson is at their head.

Like anyone else, Richardson writes best about what he knows best, and what he knows is government. The 95 percent of this book that is flatulent deals with the human condition; the five percent that is enlightening concerns the nuts and bolts of running public programs. In a benign, Milquetoast fashion, Richardson is a modern Machiavelli, full of the lore of administrative life. He speaks with relative eloquence, for example, about the "evaluation" problem—the bureaucratic code word for firing shots at a target but never finding out whether they have hit. "I have long been convinced," he says, "that one reason why the methodology of evaluation is still so primitive is that we have not really wanted to face the answers that good evaluation would produce. Having indulged the 'don't just stand there, do something' impulse in response to a problem . . . we preferred to be lulled by the illusion that we were doing something about it rather than to discover that we were only going through the motions."

There are dozens of these chestnuts, most illustrated with true-life stories. Since almost none of the stories casts an unflattering light on any active political figure—the author included—it is safe to assume that Richardson knows even more about the byways of government than he found it prudent to tell.

Along with the technocrat's mind, Richardson also has the technocrat's soul—a square mile of loyalty bordered by a few moral trip wires. As a Cabinet member, Richardson made loyalty his trademark. He was not

a man to rock the boat or to criticize one of his department's policies—at least until he was on his way out the door. "I knew myself," Richardson says of his service under Nixon, "to be a person in whom loyalty runs deep."

Richardson's current high esteem, of course, rests on his one grand moment of disloyalty. But his own account of the "Saturday night massacre" makes the resignation itself seem less remarkable than the steps he took to prevent it. Up until the final showdown, Richardson was doing everything possible to keep Cox and Nixon from each other's throats. Out of loyalty, he refused to see anything fishy in Nixon's attempts to get rid of Cox. ("Even after my resignation, I continued to believe that the firing of Cox could be accounted for without attributing bad faith to the President.") When Nixon ranted and raved about a "Stennis compromise" that would have kept Cox out of the White House files, Richardson conveyed the offer to Cox—cleansed of its most inflammatory provision. The same talent for fuzzing issues which makes his prose so deadly makes him a genius at compromise of this sort. The emotion that rings out from these pages is the technocrat's desire to survive and fight another day.

At a certain point, however, Nixon finally pushed Richardson over one of the trip wires. If he hoped to keep the respect of anyone other than Haldeman and Mitchell, Richardson had no choice but to resign. Naturally, Richardson delivers one of his little homilies on the subject of moral uprightness—"the consequences of refusal to go along with something you are sincerely convinced is wrong are seldom as serious as you may anticipate"—but the point is a practical one: it is the presence of these trip wires which distinguishes the honest technocrat like Richardson, from the factotum and the evil genius, from the Dear and the Haldeman, the Eichmann and the Speer.

This may not be the stuff of heroic reputations, but it does offer one modest consolation. In this era of men mismatched to the tasks they must perform, Elliot Richardson has been just where he belongs. □

*James Fallows is on the staffs of The Washington Monthly and Texas Monthly.*



# LESS THAN MEETS THE EYE

by Evan Connell

**The Man Who Loved Children**, by Christina Stead. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, \$12.50.

**Miss Herbert**, by Christina Stead. Random House, \$8.95.

**T**he *Man Who Loved Children*, first published in 1940, was reissued ten years ago draped with so many accolades that it looked like the Derby winner. Robert Lowell said, "It must be a classic, for there are very few novels in English that are as large and as beautifully written." J. Donald Adams called it "one of the enduring masterpieces of fiction." Peter Taylor referred to it as "one of the few novels ever written that seems a completely satisfying work of art." "A truly great novel," said Roy Newquist, "big, troubled, brilliant in concept." "It is a major work, rich in implication," wrote Maggie Irving in the *Boston Globe*. Edgar Duncan in *The Southern Observer* wrote: "*The Man Who Loved Children* is, at the very least, one of the better novels of the 20th century and an important addition to our rich heritage, in English, from Shakespeare's *King Lear* onward." Said the *Louisville Times*: "Situations are built with the sure touch of artistry that is reminiscent of Dostoevski." Said Hortense Calisher: "a wonderful book."

And Randall Jarrell, in a thirty-one-page eulogy accompanying the reissue, wrote: "When we think of the masterpieces that nobody praised and nobody read, back there in the past, we feel an impatient superiority to the readers of those years. If we had been there, we can't help feeling, *we'd* have known that *Moby Dick* was a good book—why, how could anyone help knowing? But suppose someone says to us, 'Well, you're here now: what's our own *Moby Dick*? What's the book that, a hundred years from now, everybody will

look down on *us* for not having liked?'"

The answer, as perhaps you've guessed, is: *The Man Who Loved Children*.

So it is once more being reissued and a fresh flock of critics will swoon like the Turkish imam who, after sampling a new confection, fainted with delight.

**I** WOULD LIKE TO join this hal-lalujah chorus because it is no fun to sit grumpily in a corner by one's self. I would like to say that *The Man Who Loved Children* is as splendid as everybody else claims it is; but in fact I think it is a thudding bore, its portrait of American family life a simulacrum. The behavior of the characters is very often implausible and the dialogue ludicrous.

As for Stead's prose:

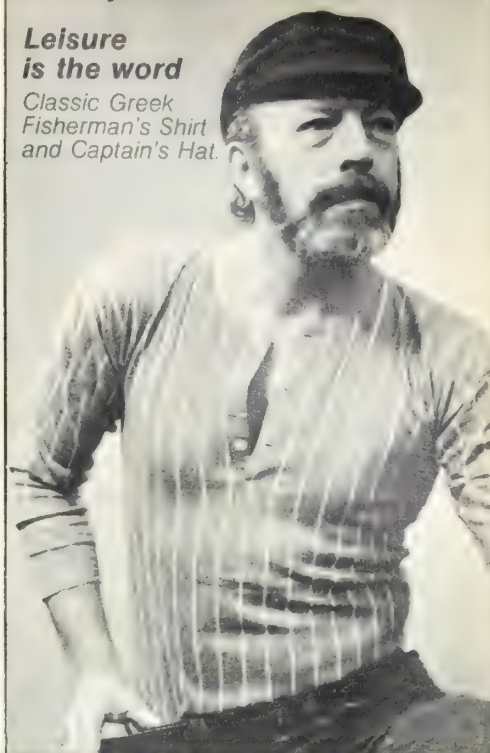
"The children were nodding but-tercups of giggles"; "The doe-eyed Evie showed a surprising forensic turn"; "... while Henny was gasping for indignant breath and while Sam was biting his lip in stern scorn"; "Neither of them had heard wistful Evie come pussy-footing into the kitchen. She now stood at the door, staring at them, in their wonderful intercourse. But espied, she came up and proffered herself"; "Having delivered himself of his heartfelt sentiments once again, Sam was gay and went merrily footling round the place, looking for fresh worlds to conquer"; "Thinking of the delight he had each time, to see the new inchoate mind burst from the womb, to see the clouds of larval imbecility disperse from the infant face, to watch that horrible throbbing patch close in the cranium and try to devise from its round forehead what its future would be, Sam got up with a sibylline smile."

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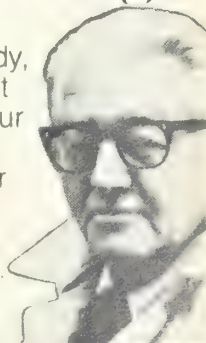
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Alex Goffryd



a bad stylist who was a good writer; Dreiser could not handle language, but what he was attempting to say was true, which is why he endures. Stead, though, too often is false, her vision of life mawkish. Sam's children, for instance, are constantly amused when he imitates Artemus Ward:

"Hear in the Buzzum of my formerly I am enjoyin' myself at peas with awl mankind"; "blow me down ef it ain't poickry. Say, kids, Loo-loo's a dangblueblasted better poet than whut I am."

Now, the truth is that children, except very young children, become embarrassed and impatient when adults act like fools; and an author's characters must respond to a fictional situation just as people respond, otherwise the reader will grow impatient and embarrassed. An ability to choose a believable response from all the possibilities is what creates the sense of life and distinguishes a credible author from a hack; but too frequently with Christina Stead the reader finds himself unconvinced.

Sam's daughter Louie holds her little finger in a candle flame until there is "a nasty smell of frying flesh in the room." When at last she takes it out the finger has been "charred." What did her father do while this was happening? He "looked questioningly at her." Louie then "coolly walked out of the room to go and wrap it in oil." Now, a deranged girl might be able to endure such agony, just as an insane father might stand there watching, but neither of them is mad.

Louie and some other schoolgirls form a club whose members wear a white ribbon with the gold letters SSAA. Stead tells us: "Parents complained about the plague of secrecy and suspected their children of dark schemes and evil thoughts." Nonsense.

Again and again she is psychologically inaccurate, which is fatal to the "willing suspension of disbelief." And too often there seem to be effects without cause—wheels spinning to no purpose:

Just before Christmas vacation "Clare tied the draw cord of the Venetian blind round her neck and accidentally fell out the window." Was her neck broken? Did the cord snap? Did she fall to the ground?

We are told nothing else about this bizarre and improbable accident. What's the point of it? We never learn. But Clare is with us in the next paragraph, magically unstrangled.

Deep into the book we suddenly are notified that Sam is about to lose his job. He had been "the rising star of the service," but now "people skipped from desk to desk laughing about him." Why? "Sam, for all his credo of the firm handclasp and frank smile, had made a sufficiency of enemies for all sorts of reasons."

There would be no sense mentioning this creaky architecture—nor much reason to analyze *The Man Who Loved Children*—if the book had not been wildly praised. It is not a profound book, not even a good one; it has no more depth than a lily pad, and the writing is execrable. How, then, can we account for the hallelujahs? I don't know, unless it may be that Stead's devotees lack that most essential gift of which Hemingway spoke: a built-in shock-proof crap detector.

**M**iss Herbert is a new book, set mostly in England, concerning Eleanor: "A nobly built beauty, playing-fields champion, excellent student, loved at home, admired at school and by men, she had been happy and confident always. Her future was planned, too; she was 'an engaged girl.' But with all this, she was unsettled."

We follow Eleanor for thirty years. She takes a trip around the world, which is crammed into one paragraph; she has many affairs, always offstage; she gets married and runs a lodging house, is divorced, becomes a literary agent, works for some publishers, and is last seen rapidly aging, anticipating her pension.

The curious thing is that almost nothing has changed since *The Man Who Loved Children* was published, perhaps nothing but an addiction to P.G. Wodehouse names such as Mr. Jeepy, Mrs. Mallow Bounce, Miss Saucing, Lord Exitt, and the Duc de Bonbonne, who "comes from the Dordogne."

We find the flabby prose: "Mrs. Appleyard gave her a good talking-to"; "Courage and hope gushed up";

"A gay twinkle would come into her eyes"; "Great formless feelings rushed healthily through her mind giving her release and power"; "Intrigue rushed into her head, giving her neuralgia"; and so on. Compare this with the linguistic sensibilities of Karen Blixen, Willa Cather, Janet Lewis, or Katherine Anne Porter.

Here, too, are the labored explanations: "Bob Standfast was a man Eleanor had met just before her marriage and in a very unusual way. He had then been head of a press agency. One of his newsgatherers had then been Janet Jackson, friend of . . ."

The moralizing: "This repulsively clever trick of the author enabled him to insult native races and minorities with sham innocence."

And the inability to evoke a place, a moment, or a season. Eleanor visits Paris and Lausanne, but we never feel the rain, the wind, the snow, or the sun, nor hear the sounds of those cities. Everything happens in a vacuum. And time? How the great masters persuade us that years have passed is as miraculous as it is rewarding; we don't expect another Proust, but with Stead this is what we get: "There were several years of bitter but courageous struggle with poverty."

And always that singular lack of insight. Eleanor makes a habit of undressing in front of a window: "It was a wide shallow box window and she had installed a couch there. . . . She walked about nearly naked, or lolled on the couch." Even a child knows this is stupid and dangerous but Stead describes it as a "harmless game." A writer who makes such a statement is either careless or ignorant. If this were the only time Stead grossly misconstrued a scene it could be, if not forgotten, at least rationalized; but there are other instances just as damaging that reveal an imperceptive author.

Publishers are much troubled by flatulence when they enter the marketplace, so it is not surprising to find Stead touted as "one of the foremost writers in the English language." Hardly. Reading these novels is like being flogged with balloons. □

*Evan Connell is the author of Mr. Bridge Mrs. Bridge, Points for a Compass Rose, The Connoisseur, and the recently published Double Honeymoon.*



# TWO GENTLEMEN POETS

by Reed Whittemore

**Ezra Pound**, by Donald Davie. Viking, \$7.95.

**T. S. Eliot**, by Stephen Spender. Viking, \$8.95.

**B**OTH T. S. ELIOT and Ezra Pound have been solemnized by exegeses for so long that the literary shelves where they reside have a churchy look; but here are two new studies, also churchy, that manage to justify themselves. They are part of the excellent Modern Masters Series edited by Frank Kermode for Viking, and they go neatly together since both dwell upon the conservative, unmodern side of that strange beast, "modernism," with which Eliot and Pound had so much to do. It is no secret that for Eliot civilization meant, as Stephen Spender puts it, the Europe of Dante with its roots in the Rome of Virgil. And it is no secret that Pound's entrepreneuring phrase "Make it new" led Pound in his own work inexorably toward the rear, with Homer and Confucius. Since the usual textbook explanations for such embarrassing backwardness have not left many students unfused, these two books may help.

The Davie book is defensive, taking its stance on Pound from the author's annoyance with other Pound critics, especially those who have tagged the early "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" sequence as vintage Pound. Davie reports that Pound himself described the sequence as "thin," and rushes to agree with him, noting that its thinness "explains why thin and constricted and rancorously distrustful sensibilities can respond to this poem." Davie clearly makes of criticism a major competitive sport and plays it hard, but Pound has a genuine fascination for him, especially the musician Pound, the Pound who lifted old cadences out of our prosodic past and merged them with his own. For Davie's purposes

*The Cantos* are naturally the Pound center. He is difficult and esoteric about those cadences; even scholars who think they know something about prosody will find him pushing his hobby hard when he discovers that Pound was dealing with the "basic rhythms perceptible in recorded history, or in as much history as matters." But they will learn something nonetheless about the celebrated Pound ear, the ear that listened with Homer to the sea-surge, and the ear that in its listenings moved "from Provence to Italy to Chaucer ('Your eyen two wol sleye me sodenly...') to Campion and Jonson, Lovelace and Waller." They will learn, for example, that a Jonson lyric, "Her Triumph," is a likely source for "one of the large-scale rhythms that ride through *The Cantos*" (it contains a long question-sequence that Pound evoked continually, in which a good sample question is "Ha' you felt the wool of beaver/Or swan's down ever?"). In exploring the Jonson lyric's rhythm, Pound's trick, as always, was to find the rhythm behind the rhythm, that is, to find the true "thematic invention" residing in the ostensibly regular meters. *There* was the source—or one of them—of his *vers libre*.

Also of bearing upon the great ear is Davie's explanation of Pound's poor early reputation, among scholars, as a translator, though it now appears that he may have done more for the translation business than any other twentieth-century poet. Why did academic classicists rush to take offense at his efforts? They had a stake, Davie says, in converting the Greek and Latin classics into what a Pound friend, Allen Upward, called "babu English." This was English that *tried* to be ancient so that young Englishmen could walk about pretending they were Romans of the great classical age, hence "thoroughly dignified and thoroughly bland,"

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while Pound in his translations reached instead for contemporary, and sometimes jazzy, equivalents, "carrying forward," as Stephen Spender in his Eliot book said, "the spirit of the old into the idiom and form of the modern." Shocking.

Of course Pound loved to shock academics, but Davie is less interested in that side of him than in his credentials as a traditionalist with a genuine feel for the traditions he drew upon. He will not, for instance, have it—as even Pound's old friend William Carlos Williams had it—that Pound was a put-on artist about languages and music. Nor will he give in to those who think Pound misused the past structurally by fragmenting it, presenting it in paste-up collages with the present. (Davie asks at this point, "Does the sea have a structure? Does a sea finish anywhere?") He leaves us instead with the impression that Pound was in effect a modern by mistake, modern not by inclination but because he had been brought up separated from a past he would like to have possessed. Davie quotes what Pound wrote to Thomas Hardy—"I come from an American suburb.... The

suburb has no roots, no centre of life"—and notes that when Pound in late life recanted his anti-Semitism, his arrogance, his everything, he returned to that theme and talked of his "stupid, suburban prejudice." Pound was not always contemptuous of his lineage (he bragged of his American roots to first-generation Williams) but Davie emphasizes the line he took with Hardy and says, "It is possible to argue that Pound was at bottom an Edwardian man of letters like Edmund Gosse or George Saintsbury."

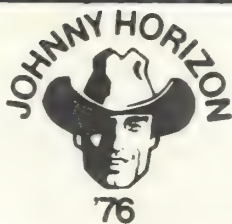
**E**LIOT, IN THE HANDS of Spender, also comes out looking more like a gentleman of an old school than a revolutionary. His conservatism began early. At Harvard he was a young poet "with impeccable manners" who admired Irving Babbitt's "aristocratic aloofness" and cultivated his own, sometimes with the straightforwardly pompous assurance visible in the early essays, and sometimes in the ironic ways of *Prufrock* ("Prufrock is superior to the inhabitants of the world," says Spender, "because he is conscious of being inferior"). The aloofness was partly psychological (he must also have been like his persona in "Portrait of a Lady," sometimes frigidly incapable of responding even when offered intimacies) but it was social too. He was rootedly a patrician, a Tory. He felt uncomfortable with anything faintly resembling a Whig, even Bertrand Russell, and he sometimes borrowed "the rhetoric of reaction of writers like Charles Maurras, Paul Claudel and Pound." He wrote "The Waste Land" in the heyday of his conservative certainties, and in that poem he therefore transformed the "inferior" *Prufrock* persona (who was modeled after the young Laforgue, described in a Laforgue poem as merely "a weak phenomenon in the universal order") into a weak character of another kind, that is, an exiled king and an unheeded prophet (and a few others) in a universe no longer hearkening to kings and prophets. Spender finds this switch, from a private to a public persona, vital in Eliot's aesthetic and spiritual growth. He will not take as gospel Eliot's late-life characterization of

the poem, that it was "just a piece of rhythmical grumbling" about his private troubles. Private troubles he certainly had, chiefly with his first wife, but Spender still takes the poem to be the big cultural statement that most readers have always assumed it to be, saying that the sterility of the private lives in the poem is presented as "the result of the *public* failure [my italics] of creativity within the civilization." In other words, in "The Waste Land," as not in "Prufrock," "consciousness is completely conditioned by" the circumstances of civilization."

Now from Eliot's (and Pound's) Tory viewpoint the chief characteristic of the civilization they were being conditioned by was its lack of center, its fragmentation. Hence "The Waste Land" (with Pound's help) was deliberately fragmented too. Its central consciousness was represented by several persons rather than one, and was incapable of entertaining consecutive thoughts. Orderly Tories, such as Yvor Winters, were unhappy with that consciousness, feeling it to be an unnecessary capitulation to the darkness-forces, but both Pound and Eliot liked it. In their eyes it had a true public dimension, unlike the submerged *Prufrock*, and therefore represented a healthy force in an art that was becoming, they both felt, too subjective. Both "The Waste Land" and *The Cantos* had behind them a theory of de-selfing that seems almost heretical now, yet the theory was central to Pound's and Eliot's brand of modernism.

Spender goes on from "The Waste Land" to the more moderate, Anglican Eliot—more moderate, that is, in his Toryism—who remained in spirit with the exiled kings but was, by the late Twenties, no longer disposed to describe every proletarian as ape-necked. Spender sometimes gently ridicules Eliot's ideological pretensions but mostly he sympathizes. And why not? The views were not only the deeply thought views of one of our great intelligences but they were also characteristic turn-of-the-century views, the views of Henry and Brooks Adams and many others, the views of old money confronting modern capitalism. Though they led Pound (but not Eliot) into Fascism, and though they now seem insufficient

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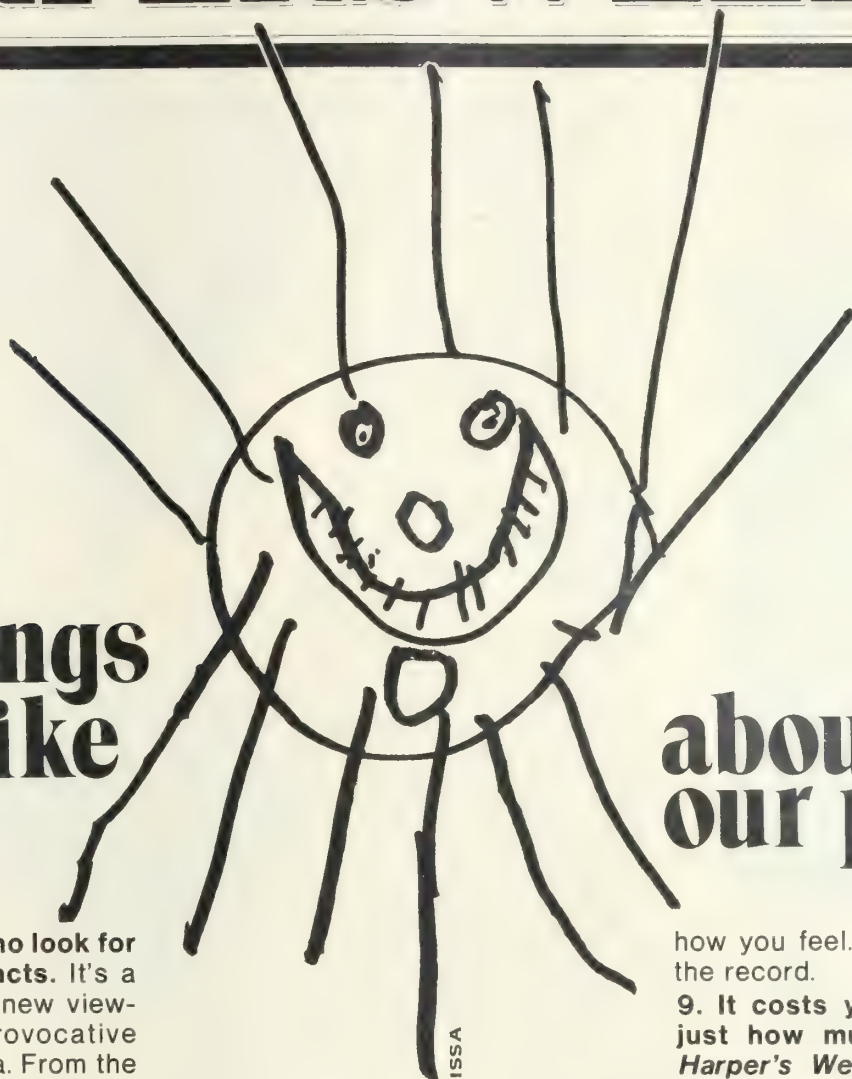
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## BOOKS

or outworn in other ways, they were also views that are now misunderstood. They are now confused *with* capitalist views, confused with individualism and self-interest and the retention of state power by an unscrupulous minority, whereas the views of both Pound and Eliot were, whatever their faults, neither selfish nor cynical but detached, rational, idealistic. "Prufrock" was not representative. Both Eliot and Pound were, in their Toryism, proponents of a poetry that was, in Eliot's phrase, "an escape from personality." That they did not make their escape does not matter so much as that they tried.

**D**AVIE AND SPENDER might be described as escape-from-personality critics, that is, New Critics (but new no more) who begin with poems, not poets. Pound and Eliot would have approved their books, especially Eliot, who wanted no one to write his biography. Yet the books, for all their critical virtues, might have contributed more to the present state of the Pound-Eliot cause if they had been more personal in emphasis.

This is especially true of the Spender book. Pound's life is already well known—and much more is to come, from the papers at Yale—but Eliot's is not. Though the Spender book is full of biographical knowledge, the knowledge is muted; Eliot succeeds too well, with Spender's help, in effacing himself. And since Eliot's poems, for all the depersonalization talk, display a good deal of Eliot's own private unliterary experience (much more than Pound's poems), outside information of that experience *would* illuminate the poems. Spender has such knowledge—he knew Eliot for thirty-five years—but he is too sparing of it here, leaving Eliot as still the most frozen of our big literary figures. This reviewer at least is so low-minded that he would like to know more about Eliot's hernia, his troubles with his father and wife, his friendship with Groucho Marx, his daily life as an editor, and the clothes he bought from Langrock's, if he did. □

*Reed Whittemore is the author of William Carlos Williams: Poet from Jersey and several books of poems. His most recent book is The Poet as Journalist and Other Essays.*

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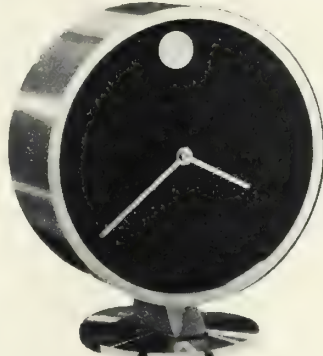
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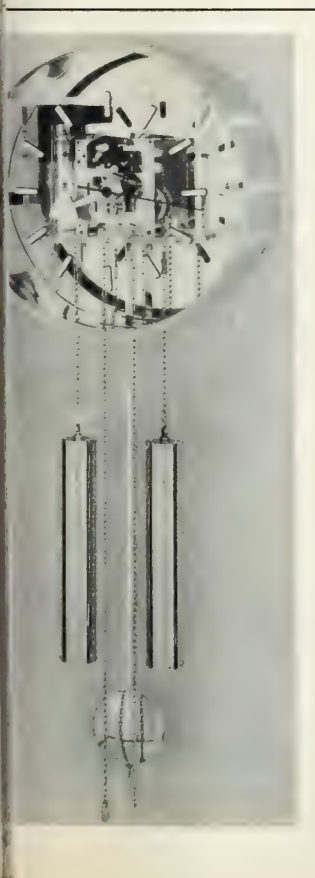
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# PUZZLE

## RiGHtANGLES

by Richard Maltby, Jr., and E.R. Galli

**This month's instructions:** Taking a cue from the shape of the diagram, the clue answers are to be entered in right-angular, rather than straight, fashion—that is to say, 24E, in a manner perhaps suggestive of 3S. The letter after the clue number indicates the direction in which the entry starts out; thus 7S goes South, 7W goes West. You must determine where in the course of the word it makes a right-angle turn, and in which direction. You are aided in this task by the fact that each square in the diagram is tenanted by a letter in exactly two entries, no more and no less.

Answers include one obscure word (6E), one variant spelling (42N), and five proper names. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 85.

### CLUES

- 1E Fully-busted so a nipple shows (9)
- 1S Salary raised—settle bills (3,2)
- 2E Set of letters? Takes a bit of alliteration (8)
- 3S *See instructions* (3,1-6,4)
- 4W Occupy land that's wide, but short (5)
- 5S Animals' holes, I hear (6)
- 6E Chalice that starts a mass (3)
- 7S New York department store returns deposit for plane (8)
- 7W They incite action in university within ill-defined limits (7)
- 8S Love, seize me. The other way is a prohibited movement (7)
- 9E Bogus saint first posed as black mass practitioner (8)
- 10S One who attacks a family movie (incredible grosser) (9)
- 11E Polish irritation (3)
- 12E Machinery seen sloppily filled with alcohol (7)
- 13W It's disaster to seek office without one (4)
- 14E Left in Midwest state, they come together under the sheets (5)
- 15N Where Waldheim gets off the bus to open a bottle? (6)
- 16W Contemptible person that appears over wound (4)
- 17N Woman setting up a howl to prohibit farm animal having tail cut off (7)
- 17E Military commission expressed the wrong way, in polite verbiage (6)
- 18N 4<sup>2</sup>—500? Honest! (10)
- 19E Leader in paleontology has shell of land turtle (8)
- 20E Mild complaints from the diarist, we hear (5)
- 20W Army chap maneuvered into the drug culture? (8)

1					2		3						4	5
6				7	8			9	10				11	
							12							13
14														
			15				16	17					18	
19								20			21	22		23
24		25	26			27				28				
												29	30	
											31			
								32	33					
								34				35	36	
										37				
										38	39	40		
										41				42

- 21N One who fascinates society, initially, by leaving in disarray (8)
- 22E Reduce margin to produce harmonious arrangement (5)
- 23N Expert has what comes after ABC time (4)
- 24E *See instructions* (16)
- 25W Early Communist translations for student Vietnamese leader (7)
- 26N Time exists for beautiful, exotic maidens (6)
- 27N Prejudice brings hurt about, exactly as written in reverse (6)
- 28S Have the courage to read *Psycho*? (4)
- 29W Harpies disturbed by choir leader of the angels (8)
- 29S Place to stick a knife in a poet who crosses a picket line? (8)
- 30S Exchange foreign currency for Coca-Cola, for example (9)
- 31W You'll find a kind of sauce around the NYU complex (7)
- 32S Do we say it aloud for a Presidential loser (5)
- 33E It beats the deuce out of returning eventually without a ruble (4)
- 34S Loyal amalgam? (5)
- 35N Vocally support you and me and a Greek God (7)
- 36N Move fast to tie up an English prison . . . (8)
- 37N . . . on the outskirts of Yorkshire a long time ago (4)
- 38S Democratic associate's trifle (5)
- 39N Affirmative is held in—right on! It's synthetic (5)
- 40S Head off unlighted boat (3)
- 41W Everything due to be permitted (7)
- 42N You can make a lot of doctors (crooked) be inside one cell (5)

### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to RighTangles, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by July 7. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the August issue. Winners' names will be printed in the September issue. Winners of the May puzzle, "Antig-

one and Creon," are Janice Ketcham, College Station, Texas; Charles Brewer, New Haven, Connecticut; and Robert Anderson, Gresham, Oregon.

**Note for beginners:** The instructions above are the special instructions for this month's puzzle. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For the complete introduction to clue-solving, which appeared in the January 1976 issue, write to The Reprint Department, enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope.



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On the way in which wolves choose their victims. The data suggest that a doomed moose agrees to its own death.
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# LETTERS

## Unfair trade

If by "catastrophe" Lewis H. Lapham ["City Lights," June] means New York's fiscal crisis, I say nonsense. Well written and interesting, but nonsense.

There are a great number of us who don't live in New York who love it, for the very reasons Lapham lists in its defense. As anyone can see, it's a great place. We don't hate and mistrust it. But we are still not in favor of federal funds being used to bail it out. Let New Yorkers, who benefit from its richness and diversity, support it. Why should those who will never see New York have to support it with tax money? Lending New York federal money would set a bad economic precedent.

Most taxpayers *do* have to live within their means, so it is the height of naiveté to be surprised that they resent New York asking their financial help because it won't live within its means. It is sociologically fashionable to attribute their anger to underlying fears of minorities and cities. But I think the reason is much simpler: ordinary citizens must live with the consequences of their financial mistakes. Why must the rules be changed for a city?

Lapham's defense of New York is interesting, but unnecessary. New York doesn't need a defense. It needs money. Or, conversely, it needs to spend less. It is unfortunate that, with all its brainpower, New York couldn't come up with the simple economic solution to suburban migration Houston did: when a suburb reaches a certain size, annex it for tax purposes. Don't arrogantly tell the rest of the nation, "I am great; therefore, you should give me your money." Annex New Jersey!

CHRIS FORSLAND  
Charlton, Mass.

LEWIS H. LAPHAM REPLIES:

Every year the federal govern-

ment collects about \$15 billion in taxes from New York City; the money that comes back to the city, in various forms of subsidy and investment, amounts to about \$3 billion. That is what is called a ruinous balance of payments. The numbers, and the politics supporting the numbers, make nonsense of the familiar speeches about the city's profligacy.

## Old wives' tales

It is a reviewer's privilege to dislike a book, and if she finds fault with it, her obligation to warn potential readers about its shortcomings. But this does not extend to stating deliberate falsehood in an effort to justify her rejection of a book.

Alison Lurie's review of *The Uses of Enchantment* ["The Haunted Wood," June] contains statements which are so obviously wrong that one can only wonder why her bias was so great that it led her to say the opposite of the truth. Two examples, one general and one specific, may illustrate.

Miss Lurie says that I was "determined to explain for once and all what folk tales, and especially fairy stories, mean." This although I emphasize that doing so is impossible, because "the fairy tale's deepest meaning will be different for each person, and different for the same person at various moments of his life. . . . As works of art, fairy tales have many aspects worth exploring in addition to the psychological meaning and impact to which this book is devoted."

Much more blatant is the accusation "The popular modern cautionary tale *Tootle* . . . is discussed at length without any mention of David Riesman's famous and very similar analysis of it in *The Lonely Crowd*." The truth is that on page 181 I write, "David Riesman, for example, has compared 'Little Red Riding Hood' with a modern children's story, *Tootle the Engine*," and on page 183,

"To quote Riesman, 'there is none of the grimness of "Little Red Riding Hood,"' which has been replaced by 'a fake which the citizens put on for Tootle's benefit.'" It is true that through a most regrettable oversight the reference to *The Lonely Crowd* which was part of the original manuscript of footnote 59 was omitted. But since his name is mentioned twice in the text and also in the index it is incomprehensible how Miss Lurie could base a major criticism of the book on his analysis not being mentioned. Such deliberate distortion of the truth is most regrettable when engaged in by a person who edits a *Library of Children's Classics* and teaches a course in children's literature at Cornell University.

BRUNO BETTELHEIM  
Portola Valley, Calif.

## ALISON LURIE REPLIES:

One of the hazards of book reviewing is that some authors take no notice of the many favorable and enthusiastic things one says about their books, and concentrate instead on one's reservations. This sort of response is especially depressing when, as in the present case, the writer is someone one greatly admires.

It was not only Dr. Bettelheim whom I mentioned as determined to explain fairy tales, but experts in general. As I mentioned in my review, he himself remarks early in his excellent book that these stories can have many different meanings, a truth which I believe he rather loses sight of later on.

As for the matter of *Tootle*, I am at fault. I should have said that the story was discussed without any *clear* indication that most of what is said derives from Riesman's analysis. I should like to apologize to Dr. Bettelheim for having looked for sources in his footnotes rather than carefully rereading the text, and to assure him that my remark was due to human error rather than "deliberate distortion of the truth."



## Cancer controversy

"The Anti-Social Cell" [June] is an impressive compilation of articles and data which will be helpful in giving the reader an overview of where we stand today in the battle with cancer. We were most impressed with the translation of complex scientific material into an informative presentation.

But in the attempt to mirror the total story, the piece unfortunately mingled some trivial material with the significant, which may distract the reader from the real progress being made. The piece by David Rorvik is just bad journalism. He culls the oddments of cancer and fails to recognize that curing metastatic cancer in animals is never a guarantee that it can be done in humans. The current indictments against the laetrile purveyors make it all the more questionable to dignify this controversy in your publication.

The Hixson article is another example. There are no conspiracies against solid medical treatments for cancer in this country. Responsible institutions must adopt precautions against introducing experimental therapies that contain risk factors.

These negatives aside, we think you pulled together a most interesting and varied presentation.

IRVING RIMER  
Vice-President  
for Public Information  
American Cancer Society  
New York, N.Y.

Aside from David Rorvik's article and a few references to vitamins A, C, and B-17 (laetrile), "The Anti-Social Cell" was a true revelation of the medical establishment's power to subvert the media into protecting its vested interest in cancer. If the facts about cancer were generally known, a billion-dollar-a-year boondoggle would melt away.

HARRY W. MILLER  
Buffalo, N.Y.



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## THE WIZARD OF OZ

Jimmy Carter's nomination

by Lewis H. Lapham

**F**OR EIGHT MONTHS Jimmy Carter has revolved like a mechanical toy in the bright ball of the media, answering everyman's question and smiling into everyman's camera; and yet, even now, hardly anybody knows anything about him. On the day that the Democratic grandees conceded Mr. Carter the nomination he could still appear to be all things to all men. In June, as in early February, the public-opinion polls showed that liberals believed Mr. Carter a liberal and that conservatives believed him a conservative. He had taken positions on both sides of every question that could be identified as an issue. All the columnists agreed that he had waged a brilliant primary campaign, but few of them could agree as to what it was, exactly, that the candidate had said. Not even his admirers seemed to know who he was, or what he stood for, or why he wanted to be President of the United States. Like the Wizard of Oz, Mr. Carter had contrived to remain invisible. Although possibly a useful trait in a candidate, in a President it would be ruinous.

On the one occasion when I listened to Mr. Carter speak, in early May at the Plaza Hotel in New York, he left his audience in a state of confusion equivalent to the confusion in the national press. Most of those present were men of weight and probity, directors of companies and pillars of the community who each had paid \$100 to attend a breakfast sponsored by such eminent Democrats as C. Douglas Dillon and Cyrus Vance. Mr. Dillon had been Secretary of the Treasury in the Kennedy Administration, and Mr. Vance, who

has been mentioned as a prospect for Secretary of State, was Deputy Secretary of Defense in the Johnson Administration. Their endorsement of aspiring politicians conveys an aura of respectable authority. Even so, the crowd was inclined to be skeptical. When Mr. Carter presented himself at the rostrum in the Grand Ballroom, smiling for as long as the television lights were on, the audience granted him a standing but halfhearted ovation. In the words of a dignified gentleman on my left, "I can't say that I trust a man who uses a boy's name, but, if Doug Dillon vouches for the fellow, maybe there's something to him."

Mr. Carter chose to present himself in the persona of the innocent abroad, a latter-day Billy Budd, barefoot and without guile, wandering around the country in search of love and friends. A small and self-contained man, he gazed vaguely upward and was careful not to move his hands. Like a small boy reciting an inspirational poem he said all the dutiful things that a well-behaved child is supposed to say in the company of strangers. He told of how he never "evaded an issue," of how he was an "eager student" who was doing his best to learn all those complicated things that the folks talked about up there in Washington, D.C., of the many telephone calls he'd been getting from important politicians, of how it wasn't the American people who had decided to do all those "dreadful things" in Vietnam, Cambodia, Chile, the White House, and the CIA, of "the deep yearning for intimacy" he'd discovered out there "in this great country of ours," of how he had come to know "the

people of this nation better than any other human being."

The effect of the speech was embarrassing. To men of considerable sophistication Mr. Carter had delivered a 4-H Club address, all of it very stale and very sweet, utterly devoid of feeling or thought. Over the last twenty years I have listened to a great many politicians make a great many speeches, but never before have I noticed such an absence of emotion among people who might have hoped to believe what they heard. The applause at the end was as small as Mr. Carter's voice. He had arrived punctually at 8:00 A.M., and when he left, exactly an hour later, it was as if nobody had been there.

Most people immediately began to talk of other things—the weather or the morning's business engagements, the cost of their property in Connecticut, or the best way to get to Maine in August. If they took the trouble to make even a passing mention of what they had paid \$100 to see and hear, their remarks implied an attitude of condescension. They believed themselves capable of seeing through the paltry charade of American politics in a matter of a few minutes, and it amused them to look briefly at the new gorilla passing through town every four years on the way to its cage in Washington. Together with their counterparts elsewhere in the country, they constitute what might be called the party of the indifferent majority. Characteristic of their analysis was the following conversation, reproduced in its entirety, between two men hurrying toward the elevators.

*Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.*



FIRST MAN (Vaguely and without caring about the response): "Well, what did you think of it?"

SECOND MAN: "The usual small-time crook. Another liar."

FIRST MAN (Impatiently): "Yes, yes, of course, but so what? You can say the same thing about all of them. Think of Humphrey, of Jackson. My God—*Jackson*."

Among the few people who remained in the Grand Ballroom after Mr. Carter had left (to continue his portrayal of little boy lost at a United Nations conference on nuclear war) the disagreement was comprehensive. There were as many opinions as there were small groups of people coming together to exchange theories and interpretations. Mr. Carter had come and gone in a magician's smoke, leaving his admirers with an empty canvas on which they could paint the images of their hearts' desire. The more devout thought that Mr. Carter was a saint. They told stories about his concern for the old and the sick, about the tears that once welled up in his eyes when he was told about a dying child. The candidate's critics denounced him as a swindling hypocrite. From their coat pockets they brought forth newspaper clippings on which they had marked passages of blatant contradiction. Other people spoke of the candidate as religious zealot or honest farmer, as effective administrator or protégé of the Ku Klux Klan. A man in a plaid suit described Mr. Carter as being "dirty mean," a poor boy from south Georgia who trusted nobody and would do his best, once elected President, to root out the evil that darkened the understanding of his enemies.

IF MR. CARTER'S presence inspires such little confidence among people willing to give him money, then his political triumph among the larger public must depend on something other than the force of his mind or the largeness of his spirit. He isn't an eloquent man, and his visions of America the Beautiful have the quality of the filded figurines bought in penny arcades. But he is obviously intelligent, and, I suspect, also courageous, reedy, determined, and vindictive. He was willing to work longer hours and take greater risks than any of the other politicians in the field, and he

understood the magnitude of the national sense of defeat. He assumed, correctly, that the vast majority of the American people, like the two men hurrying away from breakfast in the Plaza Hotel, wanted to forget about politics. They were sick to death of politicians, tired of issues they didn't understand and which didn't admit of easy answers, disappointed by the chronicle of failure that seemed to delight the Eastern press. In Vietnam 40,000 Americans had been killed, apparently to no purpose. The Nixon Administration was a disgrace, and so was the god-damned Congress. Even when Mr. Nixon had been discovered as the Antichrist his absence didn't improve matters. Within a year of his departure the fine promises about a renewed code of official conduct began to sound as thin as jukebox music. Multinational corporations continued to pay bribes to Congressmen as well as to foreign governments; judges were still going to jail; the Kennedys were no better than anybody else; and the FBI and the CIA apparently had been subverting the Bill of Rights ever since the Roosevelt Administration. Even before the advent of Elizabeth Ray there appeared to be no virtue in the Republic.

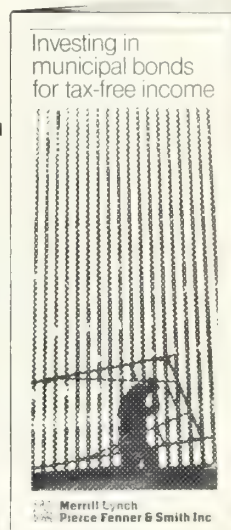
Given the general feeling of disgust, it was an easy thing for a great many people to imagine themselves betrayed. Mr. Carter brought them a focus for their discontent. Were they angry and resentful? Did they despise intellectuals and the Eastern Establishment? Were they sick of corruption and bad news? Well, so was Jimmy Carter. He hated all the vested interests that a poor boy is supposed to hate, and he meant to do something about it. To audiences consumed with impotent rage Mr. Carter used the language of Christian piety to convey a sense of the Lord's vengeance. Thus the paradox implicit in his success. He presented himself as the candidate of hope and new beginnings, but he floated to the surface of American politics on a tide of despair. In place of a vision of the future he offered an image of the nonexistent past, promising a safe return to an innocent Eden in which American power and morality might be restored to the condition of imaginary grace.

His witness was not much different from that of Billy Graham and Rev.

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Sun Myung Moon. He spoke to the unhappiness of people wishing for a world that never was. The popular suspicion of government is always well-founded. To a greater or lesser extent, all governments commit crimes against the common people. The law is usually unjust, the capital always noisy with fools. No wonder that Mr. Carter found so many adherents for his crusade against the lords temporal and the kingdom of Caesar.

His success with the so-called governing class, with people who thought they recognized him as a demagogue, raises a more ominous question. Outside the walls of the citadel the suspicion of government can be taken for granted. Among people inside the walls the prevalence of an analogous feeling, expressed as self-disgust rather than as resentment, suggests the possibility of a civilization in decline. Within the past two or three years I have noticed that a surprising number of people who hold responsible office, in government as well as in the realms of law, finance, and the press, have acquired the habit of denouncing themselves as imposters. They distrust their own legitimacy, and they look for validation in drugs, sex, and Zen. Both in New York and official Washington I meet people who no longer believe themselves capable of directing the business of the state. When they try to envision the future they see nothing that doesn't look like a Saturday afternoon rerun of the past twenty years. The same slogans, the usual compromises and the old lies—all of it miserably expensive and none of it made bearable by the romance of youth or the presence of the Kennedys. Their lack of imagination makes them sick of themselves.

**A**S LONG AGO AS 1965 Sen. Eugene McCarthy had reached a similar conclusion. During important votes on the floor of the Senate it was his custom to remain in his office, ignoring repeated quorum calls while making ironic epigrams about the pointlessness of it all. A more perceptive man than most of his confederates, Senator McCarthy was, as always, in the vanguard of the fashionable sentiment. In 1965 his cynicism was regarded as a dangerous

heresy; ten years later it had become the received wisdom.

A recent story in *The Wall Street Journal* mentioned the large number of politicians who have decided to quit the government. No fewer than eight Senators and forty-six Congressmen, many of them younger men with safe seats, offered various reasons for refusing to stand for reelection. Politics, they said, was too hard or too degrading; the hours were too long, the issues too complex; too many people looked upon politicians with loathing; they had lost faith in the plausibility of representative government, and they chose to do something else with the rest of their lives.

An equivalent feeling of exhaustion prevented the Democratic party from offering any resistance to Mr. Carter. Of the Democrats eligible to vote in the primary elections, only one in five bothered to show up at the polls. Despite the talk of denying Mr. Carter the nomination, nobody could find a moral or intellectual ground on which to make an argument. The party remained divided into factions, without any coherent objective beyond regaining access to the White House. Under the circumstances, what was the point of keeping up appearances? Mr. Carter had a new face; he had been winning primaries; the press accepted him at his word; and he would do just as well as any other candidate. If it was a question of money and jobs, and if the American people were foolish enough or apathetic enough to believe the sermons of a rapacious moralist, then why put obstacles in the road to Washington?

In New York Mr. Carter's supporters have a sheepish look about them, as if they were holding hats over their faces after being arrested in a police raid on a brothel. Instead of talking about the regenerative clarity of the candidate's political vision, they mention their chances of a connection in Washington. The more squeamish among them already have begun to make excuses. They know, or think they know, that Mr. Carter bears an embarrassing resemblance to Richard Nixon, and they don't like to be reminded of their previous statements (some of them as recent as the early spring) about the necessity of restoring to the White House a man of principle. To anybody who will listen, but mostly to

themselves, they say that Mr. Carter must be admired for his ruthlessness or his coldness of mind, for his having been "born again" in Christ or his successful campaign tactics—for anything and everything that might rescue them from a sense of their own uneasiness.

It stands to reason that Mr. Carter was not closely questioned about unemployment, taxes, foreign policy, social welfare, or the military budget. He wasn't asked the questions because not enough people cared if he knew the answers. Probably he doesn't, but, at least for the moment, that is something that his supporters would rather not know. They prefer the condition of benumbed hope. If they look too closely they might find out that Mr. Carter is indeed the Wizard of Oz, which would make it unpleasant to vote for him in November.

Nor has the press insisted upon lines of questioning that might prove inconvenient. Throughout the eight months of his advent, Mr. Carter was excused from anything but cursory examination. The rules of evidence in the national political debate prohibit the taking of testimony about a man's character, and so, until his nomination had been assured, the press obligingly confined itself to meaningless analysis of the candidate's shifting positions across a spectrum of abstract possibility. To do anything else would have been to suggest that the country was still in trouble, that the threat to the Republic had not ended with the resignation of Richard Nixon.

If Mr. Carter has not yet managed to convey a clear sense of himself, whether by accident or as a result of deliberate calculation, then it is fair to say that he doesn't yet exist as a public man. It is conceivable that he doesn't know much more about himself than the people who invest him with artificial images. Obviously he wants to be President. That much everybody knows. But as to why he wants to be President, or what he would do with the office once elected, I doubt that even Mr. Carter could answer the questions with certainty. His unwillingness to reveal himself can lead nowhere except into tragedy. For the better part of a generation the country has suffered the defeats that follow from believing in what didn't exist. □



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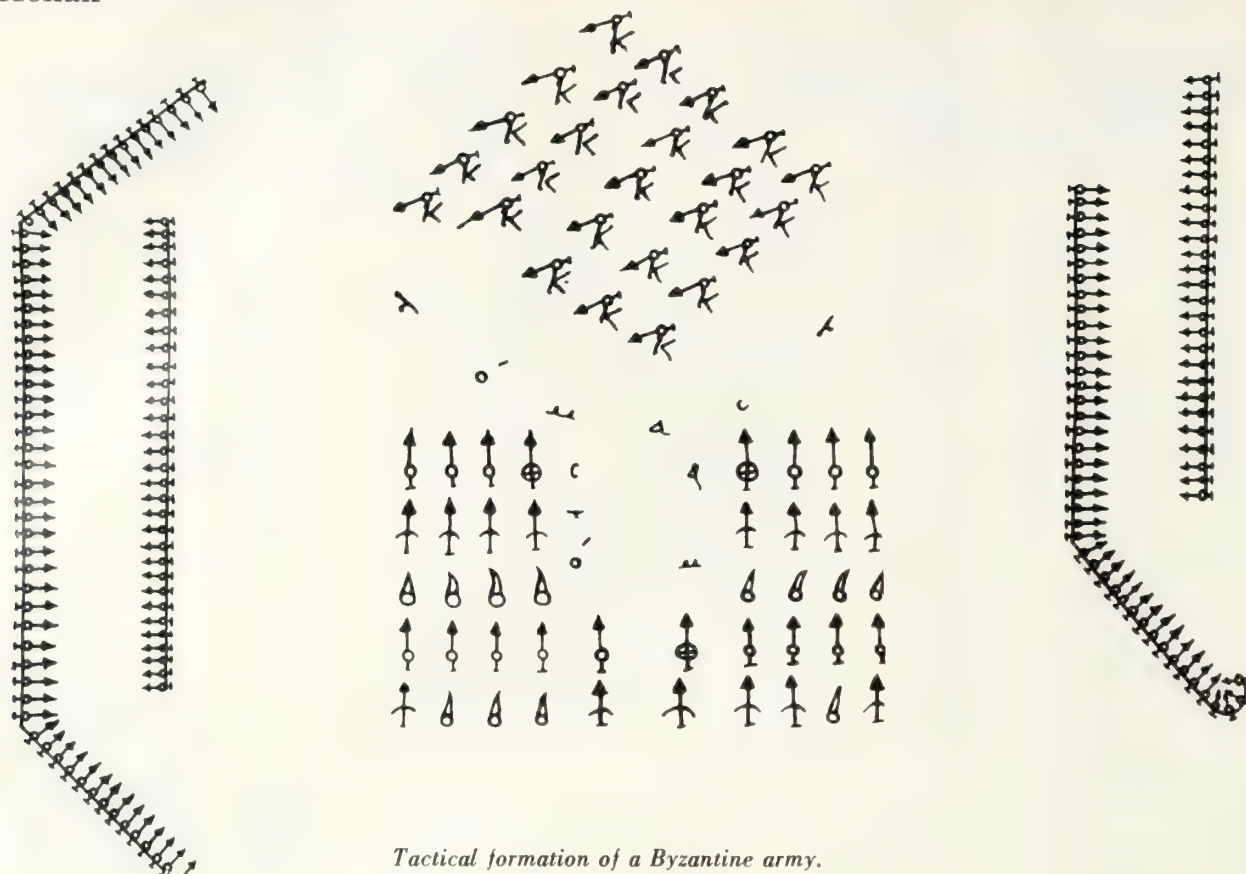
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# ANCIENT ENEMIES

by Erazim Kohák



*Tactical formation of a Byzantine army.*

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The struggle between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. is the struggle between freedom and perfection

**R**ELECTED IN the mirror of the evening news, contemporary history defies comprehension. The day before yesterday, it seemed to be all about Vietnam. Yesterday it was about oil, this morning about détente, but the afternoon editions discuss naval supremacy. For all its confusion, the sequence of events more often than not resolves itself into essentially a domestic European conflict with global implications, or, as the European philosopher Jan Patočka presents it, a conflict between Europe's two great heirs, the American republic and the Russian empire, over the meaning of the European ideal of humanity.

In our time, the whole world claims that ideal as its heritage. Even tribal chieftains call the world, though rarely themselves, to account in the language of European ideals. The clear issue in the tangled confrontation of Europe's heirs is whether humankind will inherit that ideal in its Western form, of reason and freedom, or in its Byzantine form of true faith and obedience. The fate of

humanity may well depend on the outcome.

**T**HE HUMANITY I HAVE in mind is not simply the species *Homo sapiens*. If humanity were no more than a biological species, it would deserve no more concern than the dinosaurs. The humanity whose fate concerns me is something far more fragile and precious, the moral ideal of *humanitas*, humanity as an ideal rather than a fact. It is the conviction that mankind has value and dignity, not just needs and uses, and that the purpose of human life is not simply to be born, to reproduce, and to die on some battlefield of the mighty, but to bring to fruition the full human capacity for freedom, truth, and justice.

As Europe's heirs, we bear that ideal so deeply within us that we seldom realize how unique and how audacious it is. It seems self-evident to us that people, simply because they are human, are born free and en-

dowed with a right to freedom and dignity. We seldom stop to note that this conviction is neither natural nor universal, but a European cultural achievement which we shall lose if we simply take it for granted.

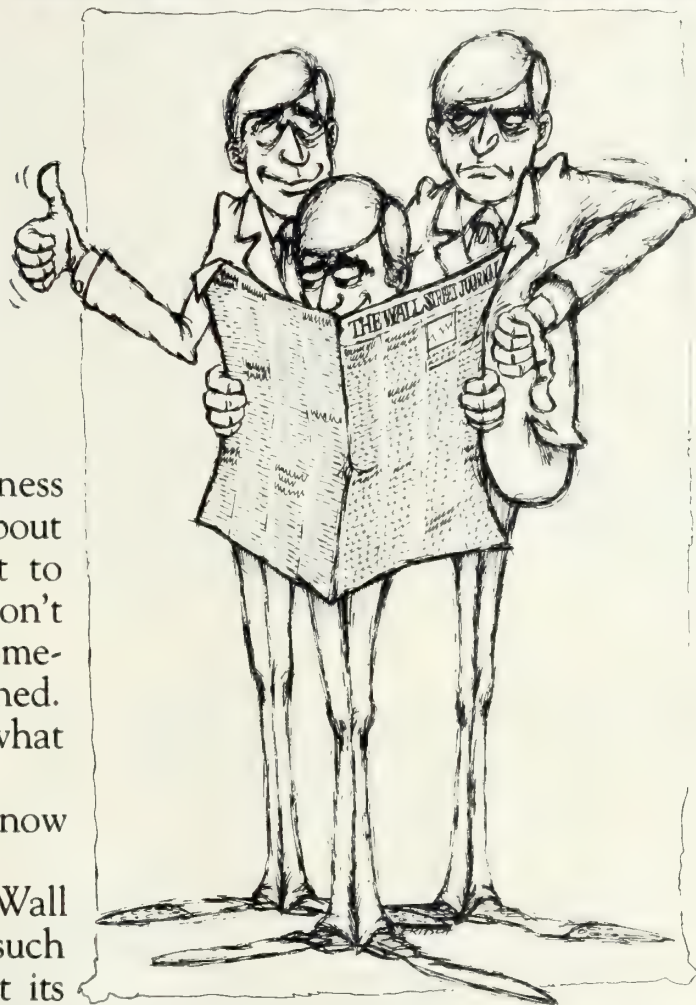
Throughout the history of the species most people in most places saw themselves in far less lofty terms. The claim of freedom and dignity usually appeared as a privilege of the fortunate few. For the mass of humankind, the *fellahin* who built the pyramids, the peasants who fed Genghis Khan's conquering armies, all the nameless slaves relieving lives of toil by the fleeting pleasure of coition, there was little to distinguish the life of *Homo sapiens* from that of any other species. Nor did the Aztecs or the Carthaginians, Hitler or Stalin, treat human sacrifice as substantially different from animal sacrifice. When we now speak of universal human rights and values, we take three millennia of moral effort for granted. When we spurn art in the name of nature, we risk losing both.

Our moral ancestors are the Greeks who bequeathed to us the

*Erazim Kohák is a professor of philosophy at Boston University.*



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human community as commonweal, free equals linked by a shared concern for common welfare. Note that that is a moral, not a natural, idea. Throughout the history of the species, the vast majority of humans took it for granted that the basis of a state rested on the ability of the strong to subjugate the weak.

The Greek *polis* had no reality other than the cooperation of free equals, literally a state that isn't. Certainly, ancient Greek practice had its limitations. There were as many tyrants and subjects in Hellas as there were citizens. Yet the Greek ideal of the *polis* has a perennial validity. It has given us the utterly unnatural, moral conception of the human as a citizen, not a subject. Not some mythical City of Somerville, but we the citizens have built our new schools—and exact the taxes to pay for them.

The Romans, too, are our ancestors. It was they who taught us to believe that the human, simply as a human, is endowed with inalienable rights. That, again, is anything but natural. Throughout most of its history, the human species assumed that individual members have no rights, only privileges won by strength or bestowed by the tribe.

It was the great Stoic lawyers of ancient Rome who challenged our tribal nature with the moral ideal of human rights. Roman practice, too, had its limitations. Roman law, for instance, countenanced slavery. The Stoics could not change it, but they accepted it only as lifelong employment. For every human, they taught us, bears within him a spark of reason and with it the right not only to life, but to liberty and identity, not as a citizen, not as a proletarian, but simply as a human.

The third component of the European conception of humanity is Hebraic and Christian, the conviction that human life is intrinsically valuable. In most ancient myths, it was not so presented. There creation appeared as a cosmic accident whose woes can be healed only with its dissolution in eternity. The Hebrews and their Christian heirs countered that conception with one of a God who creates humans in his image. Humankind is important enough for God to give it a law and to become himself human. To the Hebrews and the Christians, life did not appear as

a failure because it ends in death, but as precious because it is lived, and worthy of being protected both with prayer and with medicine. That again is a moral, not a natural, conception. Nature knows no value, only birth, reproduction, and death.

**I**T IS BECAUSE we choose to measure the actual against the ideal that our history does not appear to us as a natural cycle, comparable to the changing of seasons or the ageless rise and fall of precolonial African kingdoms. Rather, it becomes a story of a halting effort to transform human beings into moral persons. It has been a checkered history, marked more by failure than by achievement. But despite its failures Europe retained the ideal of *humanitas* as a norm. The ideal lends itself to further interpretation, which is what defines the present disagreement between the United States and the Soviet Union. For in the conception of making humans free moral persons there is the matter of accent: should it fall on *free*—or on *moral*?

Conventionally, we have identified the first alternative as Western, the other as Byzantine, recalling Emperor Diocletian's division of the Roman empire in 292 A.D. The distinction is not altogether arbitrary. The Byzantine empire did tend to think the ideal of humanity too precious to be allowed freedom of expression. Rather, it looked to true laws, codified by Emperor Justinian, and rigorous rule, embodied by a semidivine Emperor, to guard humans against their own nature. Not freedom, but obedience, the righteous rule of true faith, embodied its conception of authentic humanity.

The western half of the empire rejected that conception. Through all its many periods of autocracy and orthodoxy, it retained the ideal of a *res publica* of free equals. In a theological metaphor, it came to be expressed as the priesthood of all believers; in a political metaphor, as democracy; in an economic metaphor, as free enterprise. The Western state, ideally at least, thought of itself as a guardian of liberties rather than a tutor of righteousness.

But teaching people to be free is a frustrating task. They err so easily, destroying their freedom along with that of others. Thus even men of

goodwill (perhaps especially men of goodwill) are ever tempted to slip into a Byzantine approach: no mollycoddling, just make them behave—for their own good, of course. Should we teach virtue or suppress vice? Hire teachers or policemen? A barbarian need do neither.

What is at stake in America's confrontation with the Soviet Union is the choice between teachers and policemen. Russia, no less than America, is Europe's heir. Even Communism, no matter how repugnant, is not a barbarian doctrine. It is an attempt to mold people in the image of an ideal. It is, of course, a thoroughly Byzantine attempt, conceiving the task as one of making people perfect rather than free. Democracy, for all its failings, dares to risk freedom. Byzantine movements sacrifice freedom to perfection.

That has been the issue between Eastern and Western Europe for some three centuries. In Europe itself, those principles became locked in a stalemate of revolution and reaction. The task of realizing them shifted increasingly to the open reaches of the newly discovered American continent and to the newly opened expanse of Russia. The American republic affirmed the democratic conception, enthusiastically and often naively. Reporting on America in the 1830s, de Tocqueville noted its passionate, sometimes fetishistic commitment to self-realization. The American state remained, with brief lapses, a guardian of liberties rather than a tutor of righteousness.

The Russian empire embraced, no less wholeheartedly, the Byzantine ideal. Autocracy and orthodoxy became its twin pillars. In 1917 its icons changed: the despotism and Russian orthodoxy of the czars were renamed "democratic centralism" and "dialectical materialism." But, except for Kerensky's quixotic experiment with liberal democracy, Russia's Byzantine commitment never wavered.

Europe became the meeting ground of the two conceptions. America lent a vision; Russia sent the Cossacks. For generations of Europeans, America was the promised land, an inspiration to Europe's fighters for freedom and a refuge for Europe's defeated. The French modeled their Declaration of the Rights of Man on America's Bill of Rights. Writers





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in the Austrian empire took the American federation as the model for their efforts at restructuring the Hapsburg monarchy. President Wilson's Fourteen Points provided the guidelines for reshaping Europe after its first "world" war; the Marshall Plan provided the basis for the European rebirth after the second.

The Russian empire played an opposite role. The Europeans called it "the gendarme of Europe." It loomed beyond the eastern horizon as an ominous guardian of righteous rule and true faith. The Russian colossus crushed Napoleon and, at the Congress of Vienna in 1815, destroyed all hopes of social progress. In 1848 the conscripts of the czar invaded Hungary to crush the Magyar uprising—a role they would repeat there in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. For two centuries Europeans framed their vision of social justice between the possibility of American freedom and the certainty of Russian repression.

Those polarities seemed to reverse themselves briefly in the aftermath of the Bolshevik putsch in 1917. Russia's new rulers adopted the rhetoric of European radicalism and announced the creation of the Kingdom of Righteousness by fiat. It was never more than an illusion, exploiting the perennial appeal of enlightened despotism for the frustrated and the frivolous, but in weary Europe many were eager to believe. For more than a generation, not only knaves and fools, but also men of good faith and goodwill came to think of the Russian empire as a revolutionary force and of America as a heavy-handed bulwark of reaction.

The inversion could not last. America's flirtation with Byzantinism aroused American democracy. Russian practice in occupied Europe, attested by successive waves of refugees, is gradually convincing even European Communists that the Russian empire remains the gendarme of Europe. But something has changed. That gendarme today stands in the middle of Europe. The dialectic of the democratic and the Byzantine conception of humanity has assumed the ominous form of a massive Soviet presence over half of the European subcontinent.

That is the reality behind today's confused headlines. The world might be big enough for both Russia and

America. Europe is not. Soviet tanks along the Elbe present a constant threat to Europe's cultural heritage. Conversely, Europe's freedom and Europe's democratic socialism present a constant threat to Moscow's multinational empire. Sooner or later, Europe will feel strong enough to cast the foreign body out of its midst—or the Soviet Union will feel threatened enough to resume its stalled march to the Atlantic. Détente or no détente, a divided Europe remains inherently unstable.

**S**TRICTLY AS A MATTER of power, the outlook is straightforward enough. The Soviets will score their first-strike victories, then their ragtag empire will disintegrate under the strain of war and the crushing weight of a mobilized West. But power is not what is at stake in the Russo-Western conflict. The Western ideal of humanity is what it is all about and that ideal, regardless of the nominal victor, would not survive a war. The Chinese alone could be victors. The devastated lands of the European heritage would be in no position to play a significant global role. Nor would the devastation of war leave Europe the resources to preserve the freedom and justice which make its survival worthwhile.

But Russia, too, is Europe. Not only Czechs, Poles, Balts, but Russians are suffering and dying under the heirs of the czars. Russians, too, fought and died in their millions to rescue Europe from Hitler's barbarism. The survival of the European ideal requires a humanized, European Russia, not a Byzantine or a devastated one. The policy of alternately propping up the Soviet regime with wheat and technology and threatening it with nuclear arms is bootless. We need a policy reaffirming the ideal of humanity which, as Europe's heirs, we share with the Russians—and enabling the Russians, too, to reclaim it.

That is no easy thing to accomplish. But the alternatives, sustaining the Soviet regime with aid or destroying it with rockets, are worse. There are also forces working for the humanization of the Russian empire. They include, most obviously, the Soviet dissenters. Not only Brezhnev and Suslov, but Solzhenitsyn, Sak-

harov, Nabokov, Medvedev are Russians. So is the younger generation of the Soviet leadership which, unlike Russia's octogenarian rulers, cannot hope to forestall change in its lifetime. All of the Russian empire's non-Russian nationalities have a stake in its humanization. European Communists, who are seeking to transform the Byzantine Soviet model of Communism to a humanistic, democratic one, are working in the same direction. An America which reclaimed the European ideal of humanity and made it the criterion of its foreign policy would not lack allies.

Russia's European empire is, perhaps, the chief obstacle. The need to sustain Soviet rule in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Poland, Lithuania effectively ties Soviet hands. Russia's rulers know that reform in Moscow means a revolt in Prague or Budapest—and that revolt, if unchecked, would threaten the stability of the Russian homelands as well. But that empire is an anachronism. Economically meaningless, militarily a drain in time of peace and a time bomb in case of war, it is a millstone around Russia's neck. Helping the Soviet Union extricate itself from Europe is the most urgent and challenging task of global policy. It is also the precondition for bringing Russia back into the community of the European inheritance, and so the necessary condition of world peace.

There are things which the United States, together with Western Europe, can do. It can offer the Soviets guarantees that sovereign states in the line of present-day Soviet empire would become a genuinely neutral buffer zone, not a springboard for attack. A cordon sanitaire would serve Soviet needs far better than an advanced frontier. The United States can offer the Soviets economic aid for the difficult period of decolonization. It can offer its support to all the forces working for the humanization of Russia and of Communism alike. Most of all, it can clearly commit itself to the ideal of humanity, affirming human freedom and rejecting all temptation of "benign" despotism, domestic and foreign.

That, finally, is our most pressing need. We have lost the sight of that ideal far more than we realize. We teach our children the natural history of the dinosaurs, not the cultural his-



ory of Greece, Rome, and Israel. Yet to the extent that the dinosaurs are our ancestors, our lives have little purpose beyond birth, reproduction, and death. Our arms budgets and our peace conferences become equally futile. Only reproduction and death retain their fascination. We pay little attention to the art—not the nature, the *art*—of living as free moral persons. We mask it with a sophistication which is little more than distraction. Beneath it, we are becoming a race of amoral, technologically advanced savages.

In that context the vision of freedom becomes increasingly hard to sustain. What purpose freedom, if life itself has no purpose? The idea of a benign despot who would meet our creature needs, titillate us with death, satisfy us with reproduction, and free us of the burden of responsibility becomes quite attractive. We have alternately flirted with revolutionary versions of such despotism and responded to them with Byzantine orthodoxies of our own, at home and abroad. Too often, we have not had the patience for the art of living well or for the patient work of tolerance, democracy, justice, and freedom, of the full ideal of humanity.

Yet without that ideal we shall stumble and fail, floundering between permissiveness and repression at home, war and surrender abroad. The conflict between America and the Soviet regime is only the most overt expression of the basic conflict between two possibilities of human development, toward the ideal of humanity or toward the temptation of despotism. We can accept the challenge and the grandeur of living as free moral persons, or we can yield to the irresponsibility of despots and rebels—in the cant of the salon Bolsheviks, the “master-slave dialectic.”

If we rise to the challenge, all who have glimpsed the ideal of humanity will become our allies, whether in power or in opposition, in politics, economics, or culture, whether they speak the language of Christianity, of liberal democracy, or even of democratic, humanistic Communism. We shall have opponents, too—the despots at home and abroad, in power or aspiring to it, reactionary or revolutionary, speaking the language of Marxist orthodoxy or misappropriating the slogans of democracy to the service of dogmatism. □

You can tell a lot about an individual by what he pours into his glass.



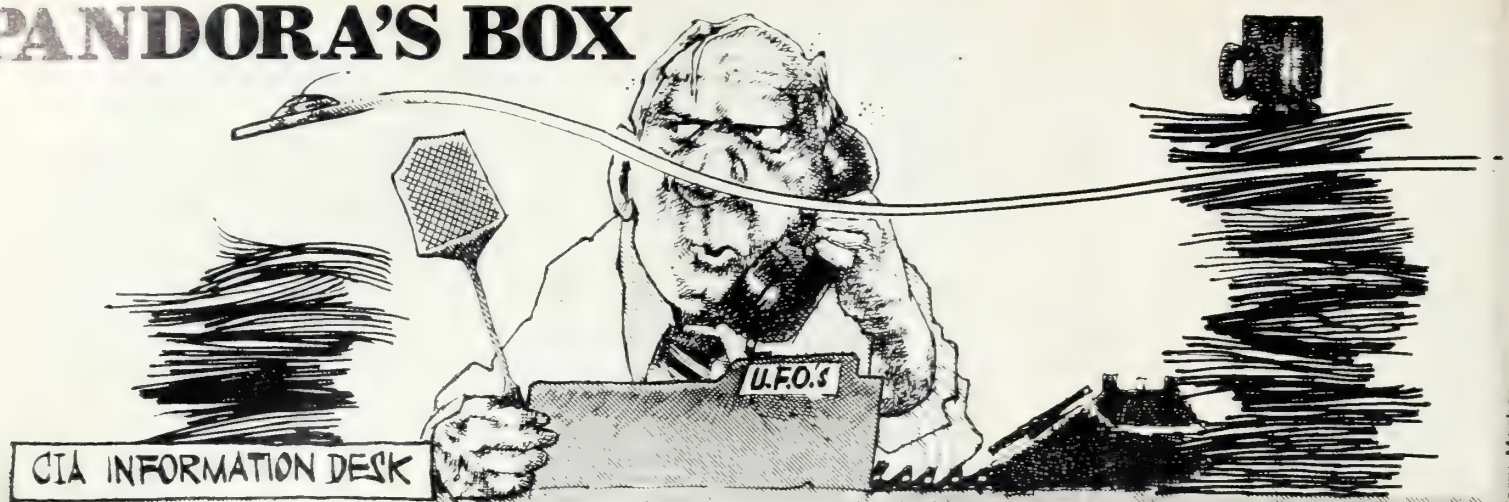
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# PANDORA'S BOX



The Freedom of Information Act opens a treasure-house of paranoia

by Jim Hougan

*One never knows, do one?*  
—Fats Waller

**U**NIL RECENTLY, I was convinced that the Freedom of Information Act didn't work. What changed my mind was a conversation with other reporters whose own FOI requests had yielded little more than frustration. While we all agreed that our demands had been defeated by officials taking wily advantage of our innocence, penury, and the loopholes within the act, the conversation was nevertheless entertaining, because the requests themselves were so intriguing. Yet it occurred to me that, while the FOI Act might be of limited utility in obtaining federal records of national significance, it provides an opportunity to discover the *kinds* of information being sought. Accordingly, I filed an FOI request for a list of all the FOI requests made of the CIA within the past three months.

Before long, a copy of the Agency's FOI log arrived in the mail. Basically, this is a chronological list of summarized requests with notations as to any disposition that may have been made. In another sense, however, the log is an index to the suspicions, insights, fantasies, and fears of those seeking information from the Agency.

What do people want to know? Almost anything; it's a cabbages-and-kings sort of thing. Leafing through the log, one finds requests for any information that may be in CIA files pertaining to:

The Battelle Memorial Institute

The Society for the Investigation of Human Ecology

UFOs

Moral Re-Armament

UFOs

*The Spook Who Sat by the Door* (a B movie)

UFOs

The "Forever Family"

East Bay Women for Peace

*Where's What*

Marilyn Monroe

and guerrilla troop movements in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau.

Farther along, there are requests for CIA data anent:

The Reformation Gospel Press

Gran Oriente Nacional de Puerto Rico

Rico

Someone's deceased father

The U.S. March for Victory

*The 20th Century Reformation Hour*

Someone's deceased husband

WXUR-AM and -FM

UFOs

The SLA

The death of Amelia Earhart

Lehigh-Pocono Committee of Concern

*Where's What*

Black Muslims

KOPOK-438

The Williamsburg, Virginia, Gazette

*Dialogue Magazine*

Someone's deceased husband

Frantz Fanon

UFOs

The Pacifica Foundation

Rev. Sun Myung Moon

*Where's What*

The National Committee Against Repressive Legislation

Harvard mail-openings

Brainwashing

Hypnosis

Rev. Sun Myung Moon

and Dr. Tom Dooley.

Elsewhere, other requests about:

MKULTRA

The Los Angeles Free Clinic

Action Books

Airlie House and Conference Center

ter

Boston's Potemkin Collective and All Hands Abandon Ship

"Operation Unicorn"

Jayne Mansfield

Brainwashing

"Operation Ajax"

*Where's What*

Behavior mod

Slovak National Uprising

A letter written to someone's father after World War II

The whereabouts of Dr. Mengele

Union Nacional de Trabajadores de Puerto Rico, a/k/a *el UNT*

Nine computer data systems dealing with South Vietnam

The Freedom Center, Food Drives, and Freedom Schools

The Punta Aloe Corporation

UFOs

Maj. Gen. Robert Grow, U.S. military attaché with the American Embassy in Moscow during 1951

The American Security Council Library

*Peking Trends*

Rev. Sun Myung Moon

CIA reports on Robert Vesco and Investors Overseas Services

Chicago Red Squad

Lee Harvey Oswald

*Jim Hougan is a contributing editor of Harper's.*



Aristotle Onassis and Stavros Niarchos  
 Ali Sabry  
 Antoine Gizenga  
 Air America  
 Shelton College  
 Someone's brother

Circumstances surrounding an employee's being fired from his job in 1964

Independent Board of Presbyterian Home Missions

Gateway to the Stars Christian Community

UFOs

Contracts with Syracuse University

The Atlantic City Christian Association

Sgt. D. Groth (Illinois Police Department) and the arrest/detention of T. Vallee

CIA contacts with Santa Monica and/or Culver City, California, police departments or members thereof

*Where's What*

The declassification/review of a document entitled "Psychological Operations" (December 9, 1947)

Special-intelligence and insider briefings given to U.S. journalists

Relatives supposedly executed in Poland by Nazis

Names of journalists working as agents of CIA

The 1967 National Conference for a New Politics

The role of missionaries and clergy in espionage

The whereabouts of several escaped Nazi war criminals and the meaning of "the personnel designer 'ece.'"

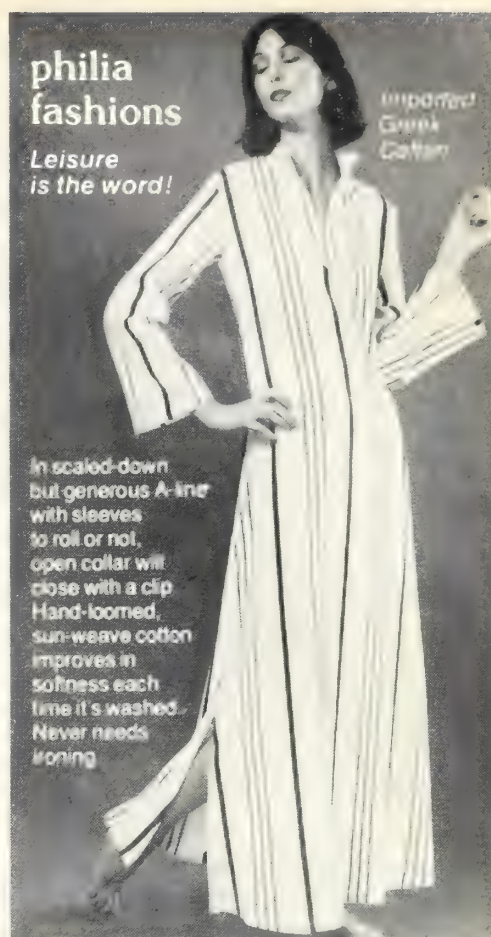
**W**HO WOULD have thought that America could be so interesting, so creative, and detailed in its suspicions? Is the CIA equal to the imaginations of its correspondents? What's going on in Culver City, Williamsburg, Chicago and, perhaps, Santa Monica, too? Where is Shelton College? Who is Ali Sabry? What bright point of "pathological inertia" surfaced in which a citizen's mind caused him to suspect a dark meaning in the bread notation "ece" (and is he right)? What, after all, is the Punta Aloe Corporation, whose name suggests Somerset Maugham and the manufacture of both arms and balms?

What's the real story on WXUR-AM, and what in God's name has been going down at the Potemkin Collective? Did the CIA infiltrate the East Bay Women for Peace, insinuating matron-provocateurs in the ladies' circle?

Trying to categorize these requests is folly. They're motes, monads resisting constellation, having nothing in common but someone's belief that each bears a covert relationship (as agent or victim) to the planet's largest secret society.

Nevertheless, there *are* constellations to be found within the log. Gene Wilson, coordinator of information and privacy for the CIA, remarks upon the number of people inquiring into the circumstances of Amelia Earhart's disappearance, Sun Myung Moon's theological apparatus, and the Patty Hearst edda. Requests for materials on brainwashing and hypnosis are also numerous, as are inquiries concerning CIA-involvements with missionaries and local police. In the document category, there are some obvious best-sellers: *Where's What* and the Robertson Report. The former is a 452-page manual for federal investigators written by the CIA's Harry J. Murphy while on leave to the Brookings Institution in 1965. Invaluable for bill collectors and spies alike, the manual is a marvel of ingenious sourcing, capable of locating information on virtually anyone who can be said to have characteristics. (It is now available from Warner Paperback Library.) The Robertson Report, on the other hand, details a series of meetings held by the CIA in 1953 on the subject of flying saucers. While no one could be certain whether the phenomena originated from Mars, Irkutsk, or astigmatism, most agreed that the Russians might manipulate the "UFO myth" to America's disadvantage. And so the Agency decided that the UFOs must be "debunked" and, toward that end, discussed putting UFO study groups under surveillance while inaugurating a psychological operation to ridicule those at home who believed the saucers to be significant. (Arthur Godfrey and Walt Disney were proposed as leaders of the campaign.)

Inquiries regarding JFK's assassination (somewhat larger in number than those pertaining to his satyriasis) have, predictably, yielded an-



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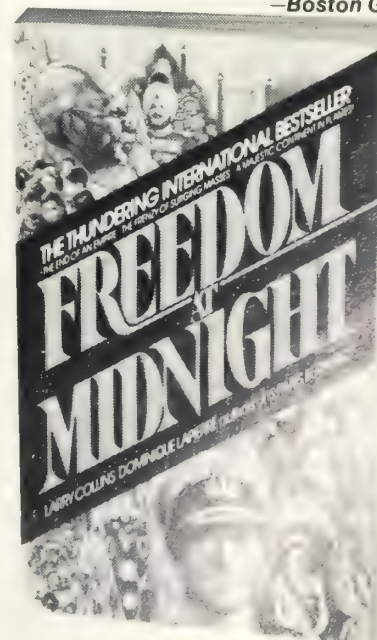
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other best seller of sorts: a 1,400-page compilation of CIA cables, memoranda, and dispatches relating to the mysteries of Dealey Plaza.

Another constellation to be found within the log has to do with the apparently mysterious circumstances surrounding the deaths of husbands and fathers. It seems that a few of these inquiries pertain to soldiers missing in Vietnam; most, however, appear to be in response to newspaper articles reporting CIA drug experiments with military and civilian dupes in the 1950s, and the subsequent unexpected demise of one or more of those unwitting "volunteers." Obviously, more than a few wives and children believe that their loved ones' deaths may have been connected to Agency operations of one kind or another.

**A**LTHOUGH OMITTED from the list above, the greatest number of requests seek personal files on the writer. This is the Orion of the FOI Act. The CIA reports that it received 552 of these last year and, among them, about one in six proved to be "hits." (Learning that the CIA doesn't have a file on you can be as traumatic as finding out that it does. A friend who'd been one of the most manic Marxists of the 1960s recently discovered that the Agency had never heard of him—until, of course, he requested his "dossier," citing an impressive list of anti-American credentials. His response to the CIA's professed ignorance of his activities was one of incredulity, succeeded by chagrin, then outrage, and finally despair at the apparent futility of political agitation.)

What changed my mind about the success or failure of the FOI Act's first year, however, was a look at the statistics. For instance: it is, or ought to be, news that five out of six people who believed themselves to be the subject of CIA surveillance and record-keeping were, in fact, wholly unknown to the Agency. Despite all the hand-wringing about Operation Chaos, it seems that the CIA had much less to do with domestic invasions of privacy than many believed.

Second, of 6,031 FOI requests processed by the Agency at this writing, 4,577 searches turned up abso-

lutely nothing. What this suggests is that nearly 5,000 suspicions have been put to rest so far, thereby lightening the collective load of paranoia. (Or, if they haven't been put to rest, they have at least been consolidated into a single probable delusion: that the CIA lies about the documents in its possession, rather than simply denying their release.)

Of the remainder, 300 requests resulted in the Agency's yielding everything solicited; 428 generated the release of "segregable portions" of documents; and 174 caused the CIA to refuse the documents' release, citing various exemptions. From this, it might be thought that the Agency, in refusing to release part or all of the information sought in 602 requests, thereby indirectly acknowledged the material's "bombshell" status. In fact, much of the material seems to have been withheld for reasons that are both appropriate and banal. Requests for news about John F. Kennedy's extramarital sex life, for instance, were denied on the ground that the release of any material which the Agency might have would violate the privacy of JFK's paramours. In other cases, documents were sought by corporations wanting to learn their competitors' trade secrets. And, of course, some naifs have bluntly requested the names of CIA proprietaries, covers, and agents.

**A**DMITTEDLY, the FOI Act has so far not made any great contributions to the national debate (itself curiously subdued). Part of the blame for that rests with some of those seeking information. Besides "shot-gun requests" for "everything you've got on Palestine and the Berlin blockade," officials are having to cope with individuals who've filed literally *stacks* of FOI demands. (In one case, an attorney for the Church of Scientology has filed more than 200 requests with various agencies. In another, an individual wrote to the CIA informing it that he expected to be filing numerous requests because, being unemployed, he had nothing better to do and he thought they ought to be prepared.)

Part of the blame rests with the government, as well. Despite 100 employees working full time on FOI

requests, and a salary-budget of \$1.5 million, the CIA has a backlog of more than 2,000 requests waiting to be processed (the FBI backlog is three times as large). Obviously, neither agency can comply with the spirit of the law's time limitations. The bureaucrats are not dragging their feet; but the act's implementation has an abysmally low priority—witness the microscopic amount appropriated by the CIA for processing the requests it receives.\*

"This is the CIA—not the World Information Bureau," Gene Wilson says, and that's also a part of the problem. The Agency (like its counterparts elsewhere in government) doesn't regard informing the public as a part of its "mission" and even seems to view the prospective release of so much information as a direct threat. After all, knowledge may be power, but secret knowledge amounts to brute strength. The disclosure of even its most trivial secrets is therefore thought by some to weaken the Agency as a whole and, as a result, to constitute an assault upon its very *raison d'être*.

And yet, the act succeeds in that it provides Americans with a chance of documenting their suspicions that they've been secretly undone by a world historical force unmatched in the depth of its cunning and the breadth of its resources. In this way, the failure of any social program, private ambition, or collective myth is seen to be the product of a conspiracy emanating from Washington. And if no information is forthcoming in response to a particular request, so what? The fecundity of the American imagination cannot be measured without resorting to imaginary numbers; it exceeds the real sum of our possibilities. The Central Intelligence Agency remains a worthy adversary, what the Left has instead of the less rational and more retrograde notions of fate and personal failure. If the good fight has been fought, and if, as many believe, it's been lost, then perhaps, after all, it was fixed. Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? Sometimes the CIA. More often Potemkin Collective do. □

\*By comparison, the U.S. Information Agency has a \$257 million budget for salaries and expenses, while Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty spend \$58 million.



# WOLF KILL

Predator and prey engage in a conversation of death

by Barry Lopez



**N**O ONE KNOWS how wolves pick out the animal they will try to kill. Biologists suspect that acting on certain cues from the prey the wolves spot the older, weaker members of the herd and concentrate their killing there. They also kill "surplus young." This is orderly and contributes to the "balance of nature." However, it's not the rule; and since the old, the weak, and the very young are the ones least capable of eluding the wolf the suggestion is simply tautological.

In recent years at least three ideas have surfaced to suggest that what passes between wolves and their prey is more complex and less deterministic. Hans Kruuk, working with hyenas in Africa, documented a surplus kill phenomenon. Hyenas, under certain conditions of extreme darkness, killed more animals than they could possibly eat. (Kruuk found the same true of foxes and black-headed gulls in dense fog in England.) Kruuk believed surplus killing was the result of a short circuit; the natural sequence of events (predator attacks, prey flees, predator pursues) was upset because the animals couldn't see each other clearly. The hyenas' "urge to kill" wasn't shut off, and so they

simply went on killing. Dave Mech, the American authority on wolves, saw surplus killing by wolves in northern Minnesota in 1969; he speculated that unusually deep snows prevented deer from escaping, and this triggered killing by a resident pack far beyond its needs.

A second piece in the puzzle was suggested ten years ago by William Pruitt, who discovered by accident that wolves signal their prey—caribou in this case—if they are intent on attacking. In the absence of such a signal, caribou browse at ease. Prey also signal their predators; the antelope flashes his white rump, a deer suddenly bolts. With both pred-

ator and prey signaling each other there is the possibility of a conversation.

A third phenomenon suggests how little we know about predatory behavior in general. Mech has shown that at least one wolf pack in his Minnesota study concentrates its killing in a different area of its territory each year, allowing the prey population elsewhere to recover.

Other phenomena, some worn and familiar, some recently discovered, take on new meaning. Wolves in hot pursuit of a deer bleeding from its wounds will suddenly break off and let the animal go. Why? One caribou in a small herd may leave off fleeing and present himself to pursuing wolves in what appears to be an altruistic sacrifice. What is happening?

Biologists deal easily with the physical aspects of death but are loath to discuss it in a sociological context. This is odd, since the same biologists agree that one of the most intriguing things about the wolf is its social behavior. The behavior of the pack is comparable in its complexity, cooperation, and exchange of information to a Paleolithic hunting group. The scraps of information gathered by the biologists who have actually seen wolves kill prey indicate that their selection is neither arbitrary nor capricious. Indeed, the kill itself may represent a response to something more complex than the simple need to eat.

I think wolves kill the way Paleolithic hunters killed—by paying close attention to the movement of game herds and by selecting individual animals on the basis of various cues. The killing is by mutual agreement. This exchange between predator and



Barry Lopez, author of *Desert Notes*, is now at work on *The Book of the Wolf*.



prey might be called the conversation of death.

**W**OLVES ARE the most elusive social animals in the Northern Hemisphere. They are rarely seen; major studies of wolves in the wild are complex, expensive, and can be counted on the fingers of both hands. All that is known about the wolf—its social organization, biology, ecology, behavior—has been learned in the past thirty-five years, with the perfection of aerial observation techniques and the development of the radio collar as an aid in tracking.

The wolf has long had a reputation as a wanton, innately evil creature, a sort of terrestrial shark. It runs down large ungulates, slashing at their hams, ripping their flanks, tearing at their heads until the animals weaken enough to be thrown to the ground; then it may rip open the abdominal cavity and begin eating before the animal is actually dead. Yet where the shark is a peabrain loner the wolf has proved to be a sophisticated social animal with at least three systems of intra- and interpack communication: vocal, postural, and olfactory. He coordinates hunts, plans ambushes, peaceably shares food, plays with his young, courts his mate, and joins other wolves to howl in what one scientist calls "the jubilation of wolves." Following the publication of Aldo Leopold's classic *Game Management* and a pioneering study of wolves by the late Adolph Murie in 1944, it was accepted that the function of wolves in the scheme of things was to "cull" their prey, to keep it from overpopulating an area, overbrowsing it, and starving to death. But no one knew how they did it, or why.

**B**EGINNING IN THE winter of 1959, Dave Mech spent more than 400 hours over a period of three years in a tiny plane suspended over the 210 square miles of Isle Royale in Lake Superior, looking for wolves. During that time, when the snow conditions provided a contrasting background and the lack of deciduous growth allowed for increased visibility, Mech observed encounters between wolves

and their major prey species, the moose.

Of the 160 moose Mech saw from the air on Isle Royale and judged to be within range of hunting wolves, twenty-nine were ignored, eleven discovered the wolves first and eluded them, and twenty-four refused to run and were left alone. Of the ninety-six that ran, forty-three got away immediately, thirty-four were surrounded but not harmed, twelve made successful defensive stands, and seven were attacked. Of these seven, six were killed, and one was wounded and abandoned.

Today, seventeen years later, Mech is more than ten years into a study of wolves in northern Minnesota, where the last wolf population in America outside Alaska is concentrated. He has watched them track, chase, and kill their primary prey species, the white-tailed deer. Mech knows the physics of how wolves kill and he knows something about why they kill, but he still does not know why one animal in a herd is killed and another goes free.

Postmortem examination of prey on Isle Royale and in other studies showed that wolves did select primarily the very young, the old, and the injured and diseased. However, the observation can be reversed: it can be said that these three groups "gave" themselves to the wolf in ritual suicide, or that the animals fell victim because they were ill-equipped to escape.

Vulnerable prey animals apparently "announce" their condition to wolves by subtleties of stance, peculiarity of gait, rank breath, or more obvious signs of visible infection. Frequently wolves "test" a herd by making it run. The Nunamiut Eskimo, who live on the Arctic slope with wolves, have observed that hundreds of animals may be chased, many lackadaisically, before a burst of speed brings one down. The Nunamiut think a wolf can bring down any caribou it chooses, so if it's just tagging its prey they assume it's playing, testing, or perhaps waiting for a return signal from an individual caribou.

There is logic to the biologists' cull theory. The aged, diseased, and injured announce themselves and the wolf dispatches them. The young are cropped to control the size of the herds and perhaps to eliminate in-

ferior or maladaptive combinations of genes at the outset. But the drive to make the facts conform to a theory of nature in the balance is based on at least one sweeping assumption: that wolves look for moose only to kill them. Testing prey might also be a deadly form of recreation.

Wolves will also attack an animal and then halt the chase for an hour to take a nap. One wolf may insist on attacking a certain individual while the rest of his pack will refuse. A pack on the hunt may investigate fresh moose tracks less than one minute old, pick up some subtle cue there, and not pursue.

It has long been held that wolves employ hunting strategies. They are reputed to lie low in the grass, switching their tails from side to side like metronomes to attract curious but swift antelope close enough to jump them. They herd buffalo onto lake ice, where the huge animals lose their footing. On occasion wolves employ what seems to be a conscious strategy, sending one or two individuals out to herd prey into an ambush. They vary their tactics, adapting to the terrain and to the type of prey. They prefer to attack mountain sheep from above and to work a swamp in a line-abreast formation. They may split up to skirt both sides of an island in a frozen lake and then precipitously flush the game driven toward the island's tip. They use man-made roads to conserve energy and facilitate ambushes. All this is strategy, but it is not necessarily killing strategy.

Once begun, the wolf's chase of a prey animal may last only a few seconds, go on for miles, or carry on intermittently for days. However, the pathology of death is consistent. First, there is massive damage to the animal's hips, breaking its stride; then slashing, crushing, and tearing, causing bleeding and inducing trauma; then harassment, tiring the animal; and, finally, disembowelment, causing death. With larger animals one wolf may grab the nose and hang on while the others undercut the animal and mob it to get it off its feet. Smaller animals, such as sheep, can be ridden down by a single wolf with a neck or head hold. Adult moose are often left to stiffen and weaken from their rump wounds and then killed. Once an animal is wounded and has taken its death



and, one or two wolves may harass—make it exert itself, keep it bleeding—while the others rest or play. The pack may even depart, leaving one or two animals on a death watch. Yet some of the wounded survive. They have effectively announced their desire to live, as the others might have signaled their readiness to succumb.

**T**HE OUTCOME OF the hunt is usually settled in the first moment, the moment of eye contact between the animals. Mech writes, "The wolves and the deer remained absolutely still while staring at each other, 100 feet apart, for 1-2 minutes. . . Suddenly the deer bolted, and instantly the wolves pursued."

The deer cannot stand at bay and fight off wolves as a caribou or moose can. It has no choice but to run. But with large ungulates, the outcome of the stare is less predictable. Immediately after a one-minute stare the moose may simply walk away, or the wolves may turn and run, or the wolves may charge and kill the animal in less than a minute. This hard stare is frequently used by wolves to communicate with each other and to take the measure of strangers. (Other animals, such as the gorilla, use a stare to communicate also.) What transpires in those moments of staring between predator and prey is probably a complex exchange of information regarding the appropriateness of a chase and a kill. This encounter is the conversation of death.

The conversation falters noticeably when wolves encounter domestic stock, animals that have had the language of death bred out of them. The domestic horse, a large animal as capable as a moose of cracking a wolf's ribs or splitting its head open with a kick, will almost always panic and run. It will always be killed. When a wolf wanders into a flock of sheep and sees them running into each other, flipping over on their backs like turtles and panicking, there is chaos. The wolf who has initiated a prescribed ritual has received nothing in return; he has met with ignorance in an animal with no countervailing ritual of its own. So the wounds and kills in anger.

When a wolf "asks" for an ani-

mal's life he is opening a formal conversation that can take any number of turns, including "no" and "yes," and can proceed either ritually or personally from there. It does not exclude play, play that can be lethal to the uninitiated; and it may encompass humor although the encounter itself is not humorous. It may be compared to encounters between the war parties of Plains Indians, who had their own ritualized and idiosyncratic ways of fighting, dying, and laughing.

Paleolithic cultures in general tended to stress that there is nothing wrong with dying. This idea was rooted in a very different perception of ego: a person was simultaneously indispensable and dispensable (in an appropriate way) for the good of fellow beings. At a more primitive level, exactly the same principle operates between wolves and their prey.

The moose's death is something that is mutually agreeable. The moose may be constrained to die because he is old or injured, but there is still the ritual and the choice. There is nobility in such a death. The wolf grows strong eating an animal that knows how to die with its whole heart; he wastes away on the flesh of animals that do not know either how to live or how to die. In just the same way Indians were reluctant to have anything to do with cattle. They would not eat them, raise them, or milk them, because there was no power in cattle.

When Robinson Jeffers wrote, "What but the wolf's tooth whittled so fine/ the fleet limbs of the antelope," he was telling, I think, only half the story. Predator and prey grow stronger together by means of a series of tests, through all the years of their lives, tests that pit them against each other at both psychological and physiological levels, tests that weed both culturally and genetically.

Wolf and moose seem to be far better at interspecies communication than we are. There is no reason why they should be confined to the antiquated, almost Newtonian system of behavior that we have devised for them. We should not be afraid—but we are, and profoundly so—to extend to the wolf and the moose the physical and metaphysical variables we allow ourselves. It is not man but the universe that is subtle. □

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# ANOTHER UTOPIA GONE

The gentle sophistries of the Club of Rome

by Samuel C. Florman

**W**HEN I CHECKED INTO my Philadelphia hotel the night before the opening of the Club of Rome's 1976 meeting, a small green light on the wall was flashing insistently. A sign under the light said, "Call for Message." When I called, the operator said, "There is no message." I asked why the light was flashing. She replied, "The system is broken; we're trying to fix it." During the next few days, I thought often of that light. Clearly, the global system in which we live is malfunctioning. Warning lights blink wildly all over the world. So it is reassuring to know that the members of the Club of Rome are dedicated to finding out what is wrong, and to prescribing a solution. They are a remarkable body of scholars, industrialists, and civil servants who give fresh luster to that worn-out phrase "men of goodwill." Their three-day meeting in April was a beautiful demonstration of moral concern. At the same time, judged by the standard of intellectual content, much of it bordered on the absurd. I had come to Philadelphia looking for a message about the future. Like the telephone operator at the hotel, the Club of Rome had no message, at least not one that I found intelligible. They filled the air with exhortations, inspiring visions, and noble proposals, hardly any of which came to grips with the problems of the world. At the close of the conference, I was left with a troublesome question: Can an intellectual disaster be a moral triumph?

## A queer animal

**T**HE IDEA OF HOLDING the Club of Rome's meeting in Philadelphia is credited to Fulvio Oliveto, a member of the Philadelphia chapter of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. Oliveto made his proposal to the club's chairman, the Italian industrialist Aurelio Peccei, who was enthusiastic. The idea was then taken to Philadelphia's prestigious Franklin Institute, and on to the First Pennsylvania Corporation, the city's leading financial institution, whose leaders had been looking for a suitable Bicentennial project. The corporation put up \$240,000 to underwrite the cost of the conference, plus part of the cost of an exhibit on "futures" to be mounted at the institute. Surely the sponsors were not unmindful of the public-relations benefits to be reaped from such an enterprise, but compared to all the foolish, costumed stagings of Revolutionary War battles and other embarrassing Bicentennial manifestations, the decision to invite the Club of Rome to Philadelphia stood as a model of intelligence and good taste.

The Club of Rome had never before held one of its full-scale meetings in the United States. It was coming to these shores bathed in a mystique almost without parallel for an organization so young and lacking in wealth, power, or constituency. Part of the club's fame is, undoubtedly, attributable to its elegant



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name. The word *club* has a social flavor that cannot be duplicated by *organization*, *institute*, or even *society*. "Rome" connotes imperial majesty, ecclesiastical grandeur, and continental sophistication. Add to this fortuitous choice of name an arresting first report seeming to predict the imminent end of the world, and you have the beginnings of instant renown.

The club was founded in 1968 at the home of Aurelio Peccei, following a leisurely luncheon at the Accademia dei Lincei in Rome. As Peccei tells the tale, the weather was balmy, the view from the academy was lovely, and the wine flowed freely. Thirty concerned citizens from ten nations had gathered to discuss mankind's ominous prospects, and to consider what a small group like themselves might do to improve them. The urbane aura of that occasion characterizes the deliberations of the club leaders to this day, making their meetings seem a little dilettantish, but, at the same time, establishing a mood of cordial civility that inspires faith in the possibility of rational solutions.

The club is "a queer animal," in Peccei's words, with no organization or staff, keeping no formal minutes of its meetings, and having practically no budget. "When we first tried to get support," says Peccei with a smile, "we got much support. Moral support." However, the club has found a way around its lack of direct income. Its conferences, which take place almost every year, have been subsidized by the governments of Austria, Switzerland, and Canada, and by business groups in France, Japan, and now the United States. Its research projects are underwritten by governments, foundations, and corporations. The power of persuasion is clearly not the least of its members' talents. Chartered in Switzerland as a nonprofit association, the club's membership is limited to 100, and is drawn from all parts of the world, with the notable exceptions to date of Russia and China. Peccei is at pains to make clear that he has no grandiose plans for bureaucratic growth. The club's purpose, he says, is to act as a catalyst, to point out the nature of world problems, to propose alternative solutions, to alarm and enlighten governments and entire populations.

THE WEB OF GLOBAL CRISES—technical, social, economic, and political—is labeled by the club the *problématique humaine*. The most significant characteristic of the *problématique* is an all-encompassing, interrelated complexity. The club maintains that such problems as food, population, resources, pollution, poverty, et

cetera can no longer be dealt with as identifiable, discrete matters, but must be considered as a dynamic maze of interacting phenomena. This does not appear to be an original thought—in fact, it seems downright obvious. However, the Club of Rome's great contribution was to try to be specific about what everyone knew to be generally true, to attempt to quantify and examine the forces at work. Seeking nothing less than a mathematical model for the whole world, it was inevitable that several club members should find their way in the summer of 1970 to MIT, where Prof. Jay Forrester and his group were performing pioneering work in the field of systems dynamics. With financial support from the Volkswagen Foundation, an international team of researchers was put to work under the directorship of Dennis Meadows, and a year later the first report to the Club of Rome was ready. A popularized version of this report was published in March 1972 under the title *The Limits to Growth*.

The essence of the report was that exponential growth trends in population, industrialization, pollution, food production, and resource depletion threaten to bring us to the limits of global capacity within 100 years, resulting in catastrophe. No sooner had the ink dried (actually it never did dry, since the book has sold more than 2 million copies around the world and new editions are still being published) than the debate began between proponents of growth and no-growth. This issue, which made the Club of Rome world-famous overnight, has also proved to be something of an albatross. Peccei has tried vainly to explain that *Limits to Growth* was merely a first report to the club, and that it was not intended to be a statement of club policy. Club members have learned that it is easier to get your name into the newspapers than to get the story told to your satisfaction.

The argument about growth and no-growth seems to have generated much more heat than light. What Meadows said, after all, was that destructive growth is destructive, not exactly the sort of statement that should enrage reasonable men. Those who have attacked the report because it does not allow for the corrective actions people will take are coming very close to a tautology. People will indeed take action, not only because of automatic factors such as price changes (the effect of which perhaps the report has underestimated), but because of reasoned action resulting from forecasts such as the report itself. In your warning say these critics, you have neglected to consider that we might listen to your warning. Adding to the confusion is a lack of agree-



ment about what exactly is meant by "growth." *The Limits to Growth* does not advocate a cessation of constructive activity, as some critics have assumed. Continuing technological advance, according to the text, will be "both necessary and welcome," as will "higher productivity," which could be "translated into a higher standard of living or more leisure or more pleasant surroundings for everyone." In short, the public debate, while not entirely without substance, proved to be an emotional argument between worried advocates of planning on the one hand and mildly optimistic advocates of laissez-faire on the other.

Members of the Club of Rome, although professing dismay at all the confusion and tumult, could not have helped but feel that *The Limits to Growth* was a success beyond their wildest dreams. The controversy it sparked had inspired the very debate it was the club's aim to encourage.

Then, suddenly, the entire picture changed. This animated, essentially academic, colloquy was interrupted by an outraged clamor of protest from an unexpected source—the underdeveloped nations of the Third World. "How can you have the effrontery," they asked, "to talk about limiting growth while we are starving and impoverished, just planning to embark on some growth of our own?" *The Limits to Growth*, they maintained, could only be viewed as part of a conspiracy to further subdue the exploited peoples, and the Club of Rome, as its name implied, was obviously an elitist agent of the imperialistic West.

The good and gentle members of the club were shocked and abashed. Certainly they had not intended to slight any of their brothers on this planet. They resolved to make amends. In so reacting they were already expressing the moral compassion and intellectual chaos that were to mark the Philadelphia meeting of April 1976.

### A sermon and a hymn

**C**OMPUTERIZED FORECASTING on a global scale has not been abandoned by the club. A new world model has been created by members Mihajlo Mesarovic and Edward Pestel, and stored in Mesarovic's computer at Case Western Reserve University. This model is more complex than the *Limits* model; it divides the world into ten distinct geographical regions, and has data on different "levels" (individual, group, demoeconomic, technology, and environment). It contains statistical information on about 100,000 relationships, such as birth rate to population

growth, oil prices to fertilizer production, and capital stock to economic output. Scenarios can be played showing the probable impact of various alternative policies in the fields of agriculture, economy and finance, industrial investment, energy, and population control.

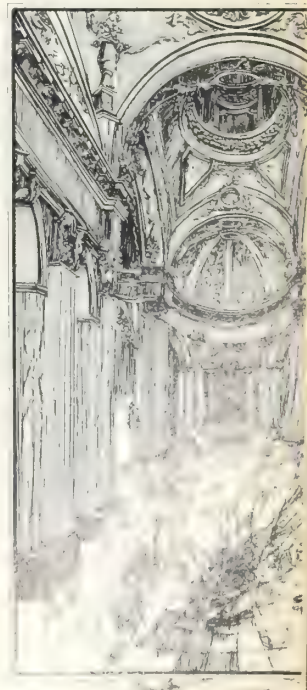
Work with this model formed the basis of the second report to the Club of Rome, published in 1974, entitled *Mankind at the Turning Point*. At the Philadelphia meeting, which was called "New Horizons for Mankind" (the titles begin to pall), one session was devoted to a report by Mesarovic and Pestel on current use of the model as an alternative policy tool. At Case, Mesarovic is studying how alternative U.S. policies might affect the global food crisis. Other projects are under way in Germany, Iran, Venezuela, and Egypt. The progress reports on these projects were, I thought, the most substantial and interesting part of the conference. I heard some knowledgeable people complain that the model contains assumptions that are unwarranted, but to all such criticism Mesarovic and Pestel respond that they are learning by doing, and keeping the model "open" for modification.

If the club had restricted itself to improving such policy tools, advocating their use, and publicizing the results obtained with them, one could only report that they were performing a valuable service. Of course, this would mean diminishing headlines, and a sense of frustration for Peccei and his colleagues, whose aim it is to prod the world continuously, vigorously, and in every conceivable fashion. It would also fail to satisfy the Third World critics of *The Limits to Growth*.

So the club embarked on two new ventures which were unveiled in Philadelphia: the RIO project (Reviewing the International Order), under the direction of the Nobel Prize-winning Dutch economist Jan Tinbergen, and *Goals for Global Societies*, directed by the philosopher Ervin Laszlo. These two works may stimulate enough controversy to satisfy the club's zest for perpetual agitation, but they are likely to damage, permanently, the club's reputation with clear-thinking people.

The RIO report, the full version of which is to be published some time this year, contains much solid information, and reflects devoted consideration of world economic problems, but it is, I believe, fatally flawed. In brief, it proposes that the rich nations make gifts to the poor nations, with the objective of reducing the 13-to-1 ratio that exists between average income in the richest 10 percent of nations and the poorest 10 percent. The word *gift* is not used, to be sure. Various euphemisms are adopted. There should be

**"The public debate proved to be an emotional argument between worried advocates of planning and mildly optimistic advocates of laissez-faire."**





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"transfers" of fertilizers, and "transfers" of funds for development (more than \$30 billion by 1980), "compliance" by transnational enterprises "with host countries' plans," "subventioning" of the cost of technological know-how, and so forth. In addition, the developed countries should assist the underdeveloped countries—or "developing," to use the preferred word—by reducing tariffs, easing immigration restrictions, and levying taxes to support a central world treasury. "Continuation of the study," says a document distributed by the club, "may well indicate that the very concept of nation-state is outdated."

IT TAKES NO GREAT INSIGHT into human affairs to conclude that citizens of the wealthier nations may not be willing to make the sacrifices called for in the RIO report. The report maintains that redistribution of wealth is required in order to avert worldwide disaster. It seems to me that the opposite argument can be made more compellingly. Impoverished masses are much less likely to cause trouble for us than developing nations, which are just beginning to feel their oats. Angola-like controversies can arise, of course, but the superpowers have developed ways of handling such confrontations. The brutal truth is that the poorest nations do not pose a substantial threat to our well-being. Knowing, however, that the emerging nations will emerge eventually, whether we want them to or not, we are seeking their goodwill. We need their raw materials, we would like to have them as markets, and we want them to fall within our sphere of influence. Also, although we are terribly selfish, we want to do what is *right*.

What the average American considers to be right tends to be expressed in the form of what American leaders consider to be politically feasible. The outer limit of such policy at this time is defined by present aid programs, augmented by the plan which Secretary of State Kissinger proposed to the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development in Nairobi last May 6. The main feature of this plan is the establishment of a billion-dollar International Resources Bank designed to stimulate private investment in the development of Third World resources, and to help stabilize the prices of such resources. There are other elements designed to ameliorate some of the problems faced by the poorer nations, but nothing vaguely resembling the extravagant demands of the RIO package. RIO is not a rational proposal. It calls for more charity than people are willing to give. In order to become effective, it requires nothing

less than a change in human nature. It is a sermon masquerading as a study.

If we protest, however, the Club of Rome is ready for us. It quickly brings Ervin Laszlo on stage with *Goals for Global Societies*. Human nature *can* change, says Laszlo. "Our researches show that the inner dimension of all major nations and cultures is capable of creative and humanistic transformation." His staff members are studying polls and newspapers, conducting interviews, and in a variety of ways trying to capture the philosophical mood in different parts of the world. They claim to have evidence showing that there are humanistic goals which all people can accept, and which will enable mankind to survive in a spirit of harmony. The final report, like RIO, will be published later this year. At Philadelphia, Laszlo presented some preliminary findings: Americans believe that their level of consumption is immoral, and that their politicians are not as forthright as they ought to be; in Western Europe the young are flocking to the ideals of the counterculture—utter honesty and self-limitation; in Eastern Europe there are socialist goals; in Japan there are indications that the aspirations of the average citizen are less materialistic than they were in 1973; in the Arab nations there is an urgency to catch up with the West, but a desire for something other than a consumer society; in Africa people are essentially religious; and so forth. "What we need," Laszlo said, "is an evolution of a new ethical consciousness." The lights dimmed, and a slide was projected with the heading "The Required Transformation in Contemporary Values and Beliefs." At this point my notes become sketchy: "all religions . . . universal compassion . . . brotherhood . . . world solidarity." It was late in the day, and there was restless stirring in the hall as the third session of the conference drew to an end. Yet a sudden hush seemed to descend as Laszlo concluded. "We all have a moral obligation," he said, "to spur development of a sense of solidarity." If RIO was the sermon, then *Goals for Global Societies* was the closing hymn.

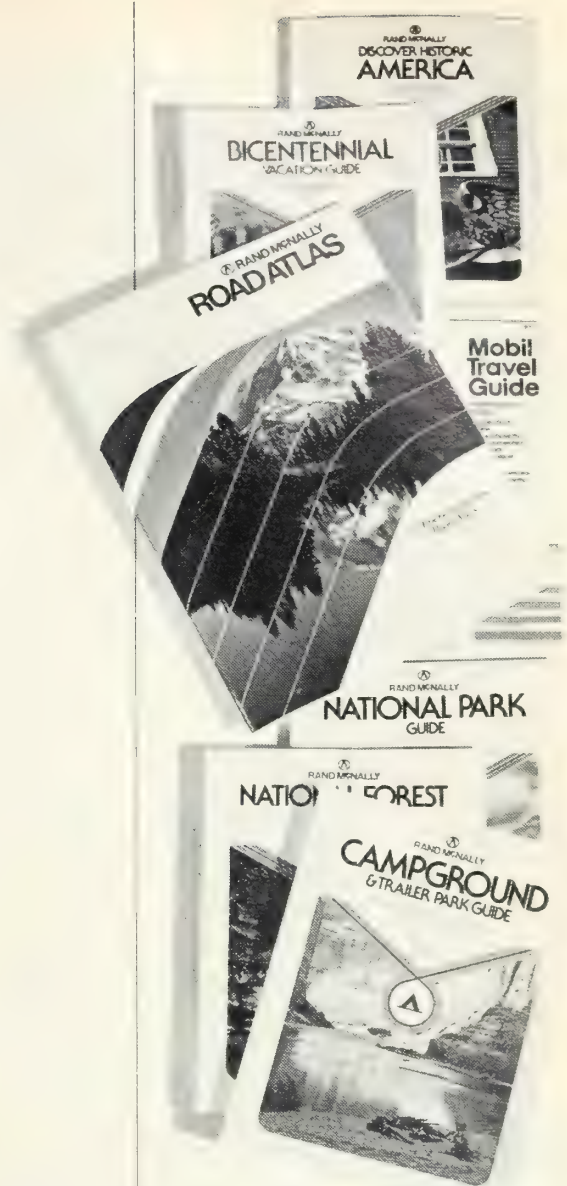
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### Romantic reformers

AT THE OPENING SESSION Peccei had invoked the ethical and moral imperatives of the Declaration of Independence. Throughout the conference, speakers kept referring to the Bicentennial and the spirit of the American Revolution. Yet the single element most conspicuously absent from the conference was the



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very pragmatism that characterized the American Founding Fathers. Jefferson and Franklin had ideals, but it never occurred to them to hang their hopes on anything as ephemeral as the "evolution of a new ethical consciousness." Their great achievement was to create a government for people who were imperfect, yet who wanted to live in freedom under a system of law. They were clearheaded, skeptical men of the Enlightenment.

The Club of Rome meeting was imbued with a very different spirit, a romantic neo-idealism akin to that which prevailed in nineteenth-century Europe. Also, for all the lip service paid to the achievements of the U.S., I sensed undercurrents of resentment and disapproval. The mood brought to mind not Philadelphia in 1776, but in 1876, when the Centennial Exhibition attracted large numbers of European visitors. They crowded into the glass-and-iron Machine Hall to marvel at the many new mechanisms powered by the gigantic Corliss steam engine. American technology had come into its own, and astute observers could see that this portended significant changes for the human race. Europeans were impressed, but grudgingly so, patronizing the young nation as being technologically strong but woefully deficient in culture. A hundred years later this attitude persists. The 1976 Club of Rome meeting was, perhaps more than anything else, a genteel confrontation between the new world and the old, between American pragmatism and European intellectualism.

The principal speakers at the meeting were all Europeans. Two of them, Mesarovic and Laszlo, were nominally Americans, but European born and educated. As for the Latins, Africans, Asians, Arabs, and other non-Europeans, most of them, having been educated in the European tradition, shared the European mode of thought. The Americans were outnumbered about 10 to 1, and outtalked about 100 to 1. However, when the final oratory died away, they seemed to have acquitted themselves very well.

For a while, things did not look promising for the image of the host nation. The ugly American arrived in the person of Vice-President Nelson A. Rockefeller, who almost soured the affair beyond redemption. The opening banquet at the Franklin Institute was one of those festive occasions that impress even the jaded partygoer. The invited guests included not only the eighty-odd conference participants from all over the world, about half of them Club of Rome members, but also a select group of Philadelphia citizens who had been invited by the sponsors. Everyone had been

checked, and then checked again, by the Secret Service. The many agents with walkie-talkies and troopers with rifles heightened the pleasant feeling of dramatic tension. Dr. Bowen C. Dees, director of the institute, walked serenely around the room, greeting as notable a collection of guests as his venerable building had seen in some time. All of a sudden the Vice-President was there, moving into the heart of the crowd, smiling, reaching out to shake hands. The feeling of power was electric.

Soon we were seated in the Benjamin Franklin Memorial Hall, under the huge white statue of Franklin by James Earl Fraser, dining on crown roast of lamb, and basking in the festive atmosphere. Then, after the coffee had been served, Nelson Rockefeller stood up and gave a harsh, crude, insulting speech that embarrassed everyone in the room almost beyond endurance. It was not a bad or uninteresting speech, as speeches go—a no-nonsense Moynihan-like rebuke to unrealistic demands of Third World nations. However, before this group of benevolent humanitarians and invited guests, the effect was shocking. It is to the credit of Nelson Rockefeller's reputation for responsibility that the almost universal assumption amongst the guests was that he had not seen the speech before he stood up to deliver it. Each of the three times he said that the most meaningful thing America can do to solve world problems is to increase its own well-being, so as to serve as an example for others, he appeared to wince. When he called the Club of Rome naive for the second time, I felt that some speechwriter would soon be out of a job. He concluded by berating doomsday prophets and expressing total faith in the American people. There was hardly any applause. He shook hands with Peccei, who was flushed but grinning, trying to pretend that he had not been insulted. John Bunting, chairman of the First Pennsylvania Corporation, and host for the evening, gamely assured the Club of Rome members that they would have "equal time" the next day. The *Evening Bulletin* reported the event in the hockey parlance of the season: "Vice-President Nelson A. Rockefeller checked First Pennsylvania Corp. chairman John R. Bunting, Jr., into the boards last night. Bunting came up fast, saying it didn't really hurt."

**J**OHN BUNTING is a slight, trim man with an imperturbable manner, a man who appears to know that the world is undergoing upheavals, and that in the future only those with foresight and a fine sense of balance will be able to keep their





footing. In his speeches and reports, which took note of the Club of Rome long before 1976, he has spoken of the danger of uncontrolled growth, while at the same time pointing out the vital role that growth, and even inflation, have played in making political and social change possible. His writings portray an orderly mind that sees the purposes served by an element of disorder. This contrasts sharply with the many members of the club who crave order but do not see the complexities—or the dangers—involved in getting it. Most American businessmen might think that sponsoring a Club of Rome meeting was a waste of hard-earned stockholder money. Bunting, one imagines, aside from Bicentennial publicity considerations, was intrigued by the intellectual and social chemistry which might result when these notables from all over the world gathered together, not only to talk to each other and to the public, but, incidentally, to absorb something of the flavor of Philadelphia, and of the United States of America.

On the first day, during the RIO session, after Idriss Jazairy of Algeria had excoriated transnational enterprises, reciting a "litany of exploitation," and calling for their control by international "antitrust" legislation, G. William Miller, Chairman of Textron, Inc., was called upon to comment. "We must consider," said Miller softly, "the realities of human nature from the beginning of recorded time. The arguments we have heard will not convince the 'haves' to turn over their wealth to the 'have-nots.' This is not a negative comment. It is realistic. We must seek a confluence of self-interest." If there is a receptive climate, he continued, investment capital will flow from the rich nations to the poor. He suggested that we build with the institutions that we have, trying to make the transnational corporations a force for good in the world.

I wondered if this straightforward approach might not bring about a change in the tone of the meeting; but it was not to be. The next speaker, Enrique Iglesias of Chile, responded defensively, "Do we appear rhetorical and literary? Well, we are building a new code of moral conduct."

The following morning Richard Gardner of Columbia Law School tried to turn the meeting's attention to the limitations imposed on all action by the imperfections of human beings. He spoke of the ineffectual ways in which our political leaders function even when goals are not a matter of dispute. His wry humor evoked little response.

On the final morning Arthur Stern, senior vice-president of Magnavox, addressed the meeting briefly. Referring to the RIO proposal

to redistribute resources in the world, he said, "The populations of the wealthy countries will perceive such redistribution as a sacrifice. We cannot postulate it as a categorical imperative. It won't 'sell.' These are all wishes." It is not merely a question of what is just, he tried to explain, as if talking to a child. We must consider what is possible.

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### In love with ideals

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**I**T IS MADDENING to hear what seems to be pure common sense, and to see that it is making no impression on the audience. What is there about the people at this conference that makes them immune to persuasion by evidence? "Everyone tries to discourage us," Mesarovic told me. "We do not get discouraged." Yes, but there is more to it than that.

One element was touched on the first day by the Indian journalist Romesh Thapar, when he said that "those of us who come to conferences are an elite who live luxuriously, copying your ways." The members of this elite group in no way represent the reality of life as it is lived by the masses in their countries. Nor, on the other hand, do they represent the real power establishment (a few maverick industrialists like Peccei notwithstanding). This point was made by another Indian, Prof. Bagicha Singh Minhas of New Delhi, who said, "The ideology that we formulate may be tolerated by the upper class. But this is hypocrisy."

Members of the Club of Rome represent neither the proletariat nor the ruling classes, but that very thin layer of society which used to be called the intelligentsia. To a certain extent this disqualifies them from speaking with authority about the future, for they represent nobody, and in any political upheaval they would be likely to disappear without a trace. One might even postulate that their interest in a world order stems in part from their frustration over the lack of a just order within their own homelands. During the three days of the conference there was no mention of the oppressive conditions that exist within the nations of so many of the participants. Not a word about political imprisonments, torture, corruption, violation of basic human rights, misappropriation of aid funds, and the rest. This may be in keeping with the etiquette of an international gathering, but it also reflects the willful blindness of those who are in love with their ideals.

During the final session of the conference a woman handed me a reprint of an article by

**"The club members represent neither the proletariat nor the ruling classes, but that very thin layer of society which used to be called the intelligentsia. In any political upheaval they would be likely to disappear without a trace."**



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Peccei entitled "The Humanistic Revolution." When I saw what it was, I felt like saying to her, "Dear lady, I have already read this, and I beg you to take all the copies of it that you can find and burn them quickly. Dr. Peccei is a good and kindly man, with wonderful talents for organizing and inspiring people. Tell him not to waste his time spinning these wild fantasies." I picked up the article which I had struggled through a few days previously: "*Something fundamental must be done to change human society and man himself. . . .* The challenge, in other words, is that of a quantum jump in human quality. Nothing less or different can suffice. And only a humane philosophy of life—a new humanism firmly established as the inspiration and guideline of society—can generate and sustain this qualitative change."

ALL CLUB OF ROME literature makes liberal use of italics to stress apocalyptic warnings and transcendental solutions. At this point I would like to italicize a sentence of my own. *We dare not trust the future of our children to any scheme that insists upon a change in human nature, particularly since the Club of Rome and others have shown convincingly that we cannot afford to wait for the millennium, but must plan and act promptly and continuously to meet the crises that confront us.* As Messrs. Miller, Gardner, and Stern told the conference, our only hope is to work with the people and institutions that exist. It is all very well to strive for the evolution of a new ethical consciousness. Who would not endorse such an effort? It is true, as Laszlo has said, that our attitudes are constantly changing, and sometimes such efforts have amazing success. Yet one thing has never changed, through the coming and going of great faiths, through the rise and fall of chieftains, emperors, doges, protectors, popes, and commissars, and that one thing is the struggle for wealth and power.

Such empirical reality does not impress the European intellectual. An Austrian graduate student tried to explain it to me once in a wine cellar in Salzburg: "You do not understand. We simply must have our theories."

It is all too easy to make fun of the implausible ideas of Peccei and his colleagues, and of the ornate sentences that filled the auditorium like music as the Club of Rome meeting drew toward its close. Ideas are wispy and have no reality until that sudden, unpredictable moment when they catch fire and explode. Then no one, least of all the person whose idea it was, can predict what will hap-

pen. From the witty conversation of Parisian salons, and some half-baked ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau, we can trace a line to the fall of the Bastille, Robespierre, and finally Napoleon. Ideas can be laughable, but they can also be frightening, particularly grandiose political ideas.

The ultimate expression of political intellectualism is to be found in the People's Republic of China. During the *Goals for Global Societies* session, Paul Lin of McGill University spoke of this phenomenon. "Freedom and welfare," he said, "are abstractions that mean nothing to the oppressed."

Beyond RIO and *Goals for Global Societies*, beyond all the Club of Rome visions of a new order, lies the reality of Communist China. It is the one place in the world where moral improvement is public policy. In our travail it beckons like easeful death, but not yet. Time enough for that if we fail.

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"Be a little naive"

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AT THE END, THE 1976 MEETING of the Club of Rome seemed both ludicrous and frightening—and yet, as I said at the outset, inspiring. The same Arthur Stern who on the final day counseled the club members to return to the world of the possible was at the previous night's dinner comparing them to Diogenes and Jesus. "The deep faith in these men shines through," he said. "With all its shortcomings, the Club of Rome is unique."

At the press conference that followed the final session, Peccei and his executive committee members responded to questions that, while not hostile, were plainly skeptical. From the point of view of press coverage the event was already a success, having received respectful front-page coverage in the *New York Times*, which in turn had brought representatives scurrying from *Time* and *Newsweek*. But Peccei, an evangelist to the end, was trying to persuade all the reporters present to carry the club's message forth continually to the public. He looked around the room, wistfully, wrinkling his brow like an aging Marcello Mastroianni. "Be a little naive," he said, "as we have been accused of being. It can be a better world."

A reporter asked, "Are you personally satisfied in your conscience that you are a model world citizen?" There was an embarrassed pause.

"We are not saints," answered Peccei. "But I will die with the belief that I did what I could." □



# ARREST ON SUSPICION OF COURAGE

by Andrei Alekseevich Amalrik

**T**HE TWENTY-FIFTH PARTY CONGRESS was scheduled to begin on the morning of February 24. On the evening of Friday the twentieth my wife, Gyusel, and I were invited to the apartment of our friend, an American diplomat. We had asked him to meet us on the street outside. Quite often the policeman standing at the entrance gate would stop guests by demanding, "Where are you going? What's the purpose of your visit? Show me your passport!"

Besides the gate guard, a lieutenant colonel and a major of the police, both in full uniform, were standing at the entrance, and that made me feel a bit uneasy. They looked at us intently without a word. Possibly, I thought, these were increased security measures on the eve of the party congress, yet a nagging sense of misgiving stayed with me.

When around 1:00 A.M. we left with our friends, Anna and Vitaly Rubin, there was no one standing at the entrance. The side street was empty. Somehow two men suddenly appeared about twenty yards behind us. After coming out onto Lenin Prospect, we said goodnight to the Rubins and walked a short way to a taxi stand. Almost immediately a car pulled up alongside us and out jumped the same two men. With the words "Here, in here, Andrei Alekseevich!" they grabbed me. Struggling with them, I said, "I'll get in, but first let me see your identification!" When they had shoved me halfway into the automobile—a third party was helping from inside—one of them, corpulent, with a sagging, drawn face, evidently the one in charge, showed me his red identification book, only, however, after covering his name and that of the institution which had issued it. Inasmuch as some form had been observed, I got into the car without any further resistance. Completely taken aback, Gyusel managed only to cry, "Where are you taking him?" and we were off.

"That's more like it, you should have done that from the start, Andrei Alekseevich," the principal agent said, "after all, it's not the first time." All the while he kept glancing nervously around. His failure to show me his identification was reassuring; it meant that they were afraid of me. The affair had

more the character of a kidnapping than a legal arrest.

Saggy face kept on puffing and fidgeting nervously, unable to pull himself together after the heated struggle.

"Why are you so nervous?" I asked. "After all, you're the authorities, you've got the power. What have you got to worry about?"

In an offended tone, he answered, "We're flesh and blood, too. We're not made of steel."

I must say that throughout this whole affair I generally kept my head better than did my abductors and those with whom I had to deal later on. I do not attribute that to bravery or self-control on my part, and I do not want to say that I wasn't afraid, but it really was familiar to me. It was not the first time; I had gone through it all more than once, and this aspect of routine kept me rather calm.

I guessed that the Rubins had not caught the trolley and that Gyusel was with them. And that is how it turned out. Hardly had we reached the fifth precinct of police on the Arbat when I heard the voices of Gyusel and Vitaly through the window. The duty area, where they had settled in to wait for me, was located to the right of the entrance, and the room I was in to the right of that. It evidently served as a classroom for police instruction. The walls were hung with diagrams of automatic weapons and excerpts from orders and instructions.

Here I spent about two hours. I was guarded, first by two men and then by one fellow, still quite young and completely indifferent. He offered me a copy of *Vecherniaia Moskva*, and I began to do the crossword. As it happened, my captors were also doing it and even asked me for a word here and there. To my shame I have to admit that our abilities turned out to be roughly equal. I, just as they, stumbled on a tragedy of Euripides'; they for some reason thought that I knew all about Euripides' tragedies. Several times they took my passport from me and returned it right away. Bored with waiting



## Translator's Note

**T**HE FOLLOWING STORY is that of an exceptionally brave and principled man's encounter with the Soviet secret police. What happens during the twenty-four hours of Andrei Amalrik's arrest is clear enough; why it happens is less obvious. The question arises as to why the majestic resources of the KGB (the security organs, as they are called) should be concentrated on the lone figure of Amalrik and why he should have been seen as a threat to the established order. The answers have to do with the Soviet regime's perception of its own weakness.

Since the death of Josef Stalin in March 1953 the leadership of the Communist party has followed an erratic and progressively less imaginative course between the Scylla and Charybdis of renewed terror and popular revolt. The Brezhnev faction inherited the problem that Nikita Khrushchev couldn't solve—how to stay in power with its privileges and authority intact and, at the same time, bring about fundamental economic development for the whole society.

The problem is insoluble no matter how the regime chooses to approach it. Simply to meet the demands of the population for a reasonable standard of living, the Soviet government must radically expand agricultural and industrial production. But, to do so, the governing class would need to engage the active support of the governed. It also would be compelled to make positive changes in the political and material life of the people. This is impossible because the changes imply revolution, which the present party leadership does not want and does not represent. The Brezhnev faction knows only too well that it could neither lead nor survive a revolution. In the early days of Khrushchev's tenure the idea of gradual reform seemed to offer the chance of development without instability. But even those limited reforms raised expectations that could not be met. To realize them would have required ever broader and more fundamental concessions of freedom. The hope for change yielded to disappointment and then, finally, to the bitterness so prevalent today in the U.S.S.R. Leonid Brezhnev took the lesson to heart; he owes his survival to his abrupt cancellation of

all efforts at reform and his abiding commitment to keeping the party in power.

As the disparity has increased between social needs and the regime's ability to meet them, popular support, never great, has dwindled into rancorous discontent. In effect, the regime continues to rule in spite of the people or, at best, with their sullen indifference. Under the circumstances, keeping a semblance of order is not a simple task. The regime has had to place increasing reliance on the police. Deeply fearful of a return to Stalinist terror (although probably not disciplined enough to bring it about), the party nonetheless has left itself only repression as the means of holding power.

This situation makes the present regime extremely vulnerable before those who refuse to be frightened. A suspicious fearfulness characterizes the regime's reaction to all excellence, any change, all truth, and most publicity—all of which are properly viewed as subversions of the status quo. Within the party any inclination in those directions is ruthlessly suppressed; in the society at large their expression is treated as a crime. Mediocrity is rewarded, and obedience and passivity are seen as virtues.

**I**N SUCH A CONTEXT, it is not difficult to imagine the threatening figure Andrei Amalrik must present. Among other things, he is fiercely honest. He has openly and widely publicized his views and criticized the hypocrisy of Soviet life. Without overly concerning himself with "their rules," Amalrik has published three major works, how and where he chose. The books appeared in the West in the following order: *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* New York: Harper & Row, 1970; *Involuntary Journey to Siberia*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970; *Nose! Nose? No-Se! and Other Plays*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1973. Besides these three books, Amalrik has published a number of letters, articles, and interviews.

Born in 1938, Amalrik acquired an early education about the difficulty of living a life of principle and truth. He was expelled from high

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school and later expelled twice (in 1960 and 1963) from the faculty of history at Moscow University. On the second occasion he had submitted a paper suggesting that a ninth-century state near Kiev had borrowed its culture from the Normans. In 1965 he was exiled to Siberia for two-and-a-half years, officially for "parasitism" (not having a state-recognized job) and unofficially for his plays and his support of unorthodox art. The sentence was reversed in July 1966, and Amalrik was allowed to return to Moscow, but not before his ailing father had died from worry and insufficient care. All this is described in *Involuntary Journey to Siberia*. In 1970, with the Western publication of his critique of the regime, *Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* and the publicity which attended it, Amalrik was sentenced to three years of hard labor in Magadan in the far east of Siberia for "circulating slanderous anti-Soviet literature." While in prison he became ill with meningoencephalitis, the effects of which impaired his health. Just prior to his release in 1973 he was rearrested on trumped-up charges, and, in July of that year, sentenced to three more years of hard labor. He refused to yield to the authorities and went on a hunger strike for 117 days. Eventually he was released, in November of 1973, and his sentence was commuted to three years' exile. In the spring of 1975 he was allowed to return to the vicinity of Moscow, but not to the city itself, where his wife lived.

The regime might pardon all Amalrik's "sins," even his interviews and his so-called slander, but what it could not excuse was his lack of fear and his lack of respect for the police. Nor could the regime forgive his creative and intellectual accomplishments. In too many respects Amalrik resembles the just man so characteristic of nineteenth-century Russian literature. In a way it is the police who are to blame for Amalrik's fearlessness. By exiling him, and, indirectly, by causing his father's death, the police removed the last possible limitation on his actions. Having absolved Amalrik from the fear of reprisal, they now must suffer the dreadful example he offers to everybody else.

—Thompson Bradley

around, I lay down on the bench and dozed off for a while.

Then the door to my room opened and in walked Major Kiselev. He happened to be the officer on duty in the precinct. In fact, I had already caught a glimpse of him. In a hurt tone he started up. How come I didn't greet him and didn't recognize "old friends"? I was already tired and not in the mood for chatting. But when Kiselev mentioned my father, I cut him off, saying it was people like him who had driven my father to his death.\* Kiselev became even more offended. He told me how he had aged (indeed, his appearance was quite flaccid and gray), yet he still did not want to retire.

"What?" I said, "You mean that you like your stinking work?"

"Someone has to work here," Kiselev said angrily. He left and didn't come by again.

He took his anger out on the Rubins and Gyusel, and he was not very pleasant to my kidnappers, either. As it was related to me subsequently, he kept shouting at them through the glass partition, "I have nothing to do with this! It's your affair! I'm not getting mixed up in it! He's well known! As it is, I've let you have a room; now you work it all out yourselves!"

They fussed about and spoke on the telephone to somewhere. One of them sat down near my wife and our friends, and was all ears. Two more agents arrived and were on the phone for a long time. I lay on the bench and dozed in my room at the other end of the corridor.

"Get up, Andrei Alekseevich. Let's go," said the one I had taken for the chief. We went outside and got into the same car, the young fellow next to the driver and I in the back with my captors on either side. They were quite hefty, but on getting in they grumbled at me for taking up a lot of room.

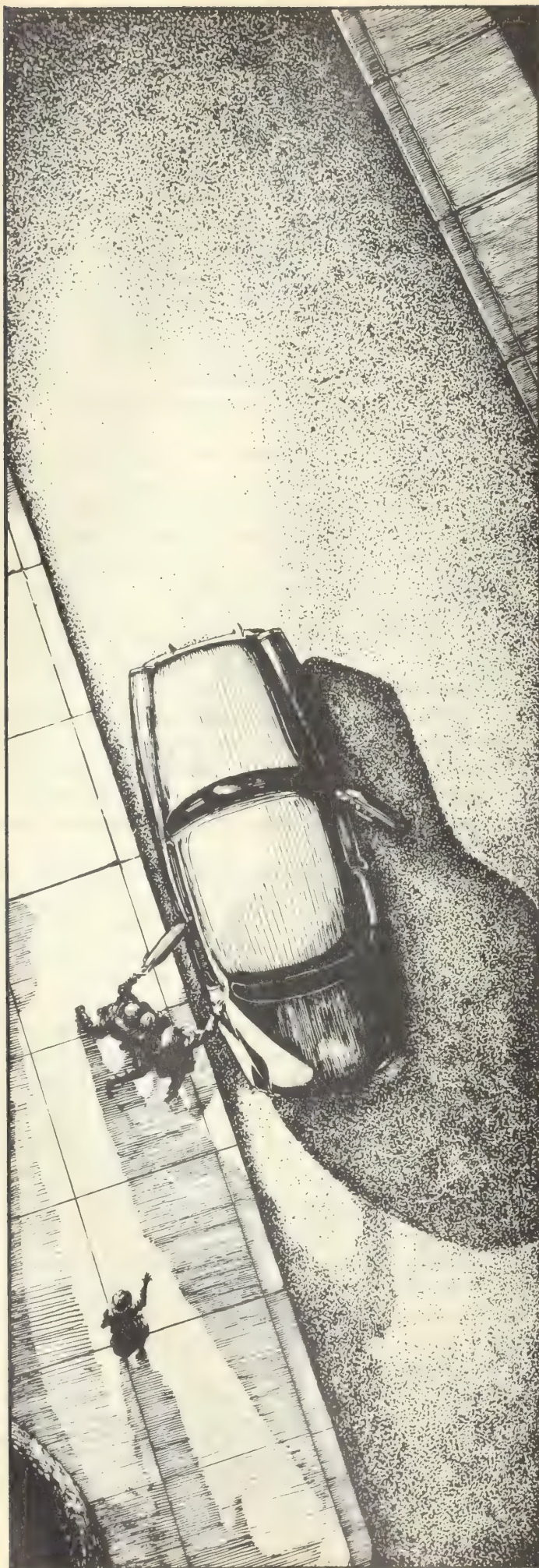
Where I was being taken, I did not ask, as I did not ask about the reasons for my detention. We turned toward the center of Moscow, and I thought, Not to the Lubyanka by any chance? But along Marx Prospect we took a right turn in the direction of Kamennyi, and I wondered, To Lefortovo? But we drove on out to the Warsaw Highway. Nobody spoke. One of them kept glancing back to see whether any cars were following us.

Suddenly, the one on my left, about fifty, flabby, an unhealthy coloring to his face (one might say almost their common symptom), and with a foul smell emanating from his mouth, turned and asked, "What's your name?"

\* Alexei Amalrik, Andrei's father, was an invalid and needed his son's attention. He had suffered a heart attack and two strokes and had lost the use of his right arm and leg. He died in September 1965 during Andrei's exile.

\*\* The KGB headquarters and a prison in Moscow. Lefortovo is also a KGB prison in Moscow.





Robert McMahon

"You mean you've arrested me and you don't know my name?" I said.

"Amalrik, Andrei Alekseevich," he said, scowling, and added with sudden maliciousness, "Where do you work?"

"What's this?" I asked. "You were speaking with me formally and suddenly you're right into the intimate?"

"You don't like that?"

"I have heard so much of everything from your kind already that on the whole I don't care," I said. "But if you want to talk with me you better be polite, and you might just identify yourself, too. Who are you?"

"Chernov, an employee of the Criminal Investigation Department," said the latter, enveloping me with his vile breath. (It is interesting to note here that operatives of the KGB continually pass themselves off as CID employees. I remember as far back as 1962 how they seized me at night in a similar manner, even presented CID identification, and took me off to the Lubyanka where the agent in charge said to me proudly, "Now, you see who we really are!")

"Why do you behave so insolently?" continued the man on my left.

"Have I offended you in some way?"

"Not me, but you have offended our society with your slander!"

"And are you," I asked politely, "speaking now on behalf of the society, as it were?"

"Yes, on behalf of the society."

The man on my right said amiably, "You, I see, treat this with distrust, Andrei Alekseevich, as you do everything else."

For several kilometers we said nothing else. Once again, "Chernov" started up: Now you don't work anywhere; your work is the spreading of slander. "We know all about how you claim to be a historian, you understand, how you give all kinds of hostile interviews and not a word of truth in them!\* Who called in your wife and proposed she get a divorce? You write every kind of slander!"

I answered that he, apparently, was mixing me up with someone else, as I had neither said nor written anything about people suggesting to my wife that she divorce me. I guessed later that he seemed to have had in mind my letter to President Ford. I wrote there that the Soviet authorities refuse to consider invitations from foreign universities to Soviet citizens, mentioning also that I could not accept such an invitation since my wife had been refused an exit visa, and I was afraid to leave without her. There have been many well-known instances in which the Soviet government has not

\* Amalrik has given many interviews, but most notable might be the interview in the *New York Times* with James Clarity in January 1970 and the sixty-five-minute CBS film made with Bill Cole, which was broadcast in June 1970.



permitted wives to join their husbands or husbands to return to their wives.

## Involuntary journey

MEANWHILE, "CHERNOV" KEPT muttering that they knew all about my interviews, that they also had my article on political prisoners in their possession, and that they were just waiting for certain additional materials from abroad in order to hang a proper prison sentence on me. I kept quiet. All these conversations—and they all are tiresomely alike—had long ago become familiar to me. So boring was it all that it did not even interest me enough to say something offensive to him. I kept quiet, which most likely irritated him even more.

As we approached the Moscow city outer limits, the traffic policeman waved for us to stop, but my abductors only grinned—and the former, having figured something was up, jumped back off the road.

"We're going to your birthplace," said my right side.

"Well, since I was born in Moscow, it's more like we're leaving, but then all around here is my native land."

"If you actually have one," said my left side.

At this point it was discovered that we were traveling in the wrong direction; the driver didn't know the way. We drove out on to the ring road and after going several kilometers, again headed away from Moscow, this time by way of the Kaluga Highway.

"Now Andrei Alekseevich can write *Involuntary Journey to Kaluga*"—the agent on my left still could not settle down. "You see, we know about our *Involuntary Journey to Siberia*."

Although the bleakest thoughts had crossed my mind, I now considered much more probable two variants: either I was being taken to Vorsino, the village where I was registered and had a room, and would be placed under house arrest there until the end of the party congress, as was done with Ina Rubin during Nixon's visit, or I was being taken to Borovsk, the district center, where I would be held in a preliminary detention cell on some trumped-up charge until the congress was over, as had happened to Vitaly Rubin, also during Nixon's stay. Nixon himself, as far as I know, was against the preventive arrests of Jews in connection with his visit.

The "representative of Soviet society" finally put up and leaned against me, his elbow painfully jammed into my side. I waited until he raised his arm to light a cigarette and managed to shift around and rest my elbow on him. It was stuffy and very cramped. Meanwhile, my speculations were

not confirmed: we passed the turn for Vorsino, and then the exit for Borovsk.\*

After two-and-a-half hours we entered the suburbs of Kaluga.\*\* Small wooden houses flashed by along the sides of the road. The man on my left started up again: slander, interviews, we're gathering material, the fate of Kovalev† awaits you, I guarantee you that, a third prison term, you'll be put on special regime, we've had enough of this talking nice with you. He had spoken so convincingly that I was already sure that they actually had brought me to Kaluga for a third term. Why else, in fact, would they bring me here? I thought. Whether he was saying this on his own initiative or on instructions to frighten me along the way, I do not know. If he were picked specially for this, then it was aptly done, because the vile stench that issued from him with every word heightened the effect.

Once again the driver got lost and with difficulty found the main street. My right side said: "Kaluga has a good space museum, and now Andrei Alekseevich will have a chance to see it."

"How, I ask you, might I see it," I said, "when, according to citizen Chernov, I will be in prison on special regime?"

At this point we pulled up to the main administrative building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.††

"Go easy on yourself, at least, Andrei Alekseevich," said my right side, as he got out. He said it in a tone which implied, "You have no pity on us and make us work nights. At least go easy on yourself."

IN THE HALL OF THE Ministry of Internal Affairs building I spent ten or so minutes, then returned to the car again, and finally was delivered to the district police station on the outskirts of Kaluga.

"Take out your belongings, your money!"—said the duty officer by way of greeting. My kidnappers stood nonchalantly in the doorway.

"I would like to know what I have been picked up for and why I have been brought here," I said, as I unbuttoned my jacket and took out my wallet.

\* Vorsino is a small village southwest of Moscow. Borovsk is a regional administrative city, also southwest of Moscow.

\*\* A territorial administrative center about 150 miles southwest of Moscow.

† A noted biologist and a member of the Moscow division of Amnesty International, Sergei Kovalev was tried in Vilnius, Lithuania, for "anti-Soviet activity" and sentenced on December 12, 1975, to seven years in a labor camp and three years of exile.

†† The Ministry of Internal Affairs is in charge of all police in the Soviet Union with the exception of the security police (KGB). Each republic has its own ministry of administration.



"How should I know?" replied the lieutenant. "The chief will be in tomorrow; ask him."

Just as indifferently I was searched (my wallet, notebook, glasses, watch, scarf, and change purse were taken away) and led to the toilet, and with the same indifference did the sergeant throw open the cell door.

Some fifteen people, for the most part drunk, sat or lay on the filthy floor. It seemed there was not even room to put your foot down. The stench was unbearable, and, to make matters worse, someone had already urinated in the corner. By the screened, paneless window which opened not onto the outside street, but into the duty officer's room, we got very little air. Through it I saw my abductors animatedly set to gutting my notebook. I was surprised they had not gotten me to sign some kind of charge sheet or even an inventory of the belongings they had confiscated.

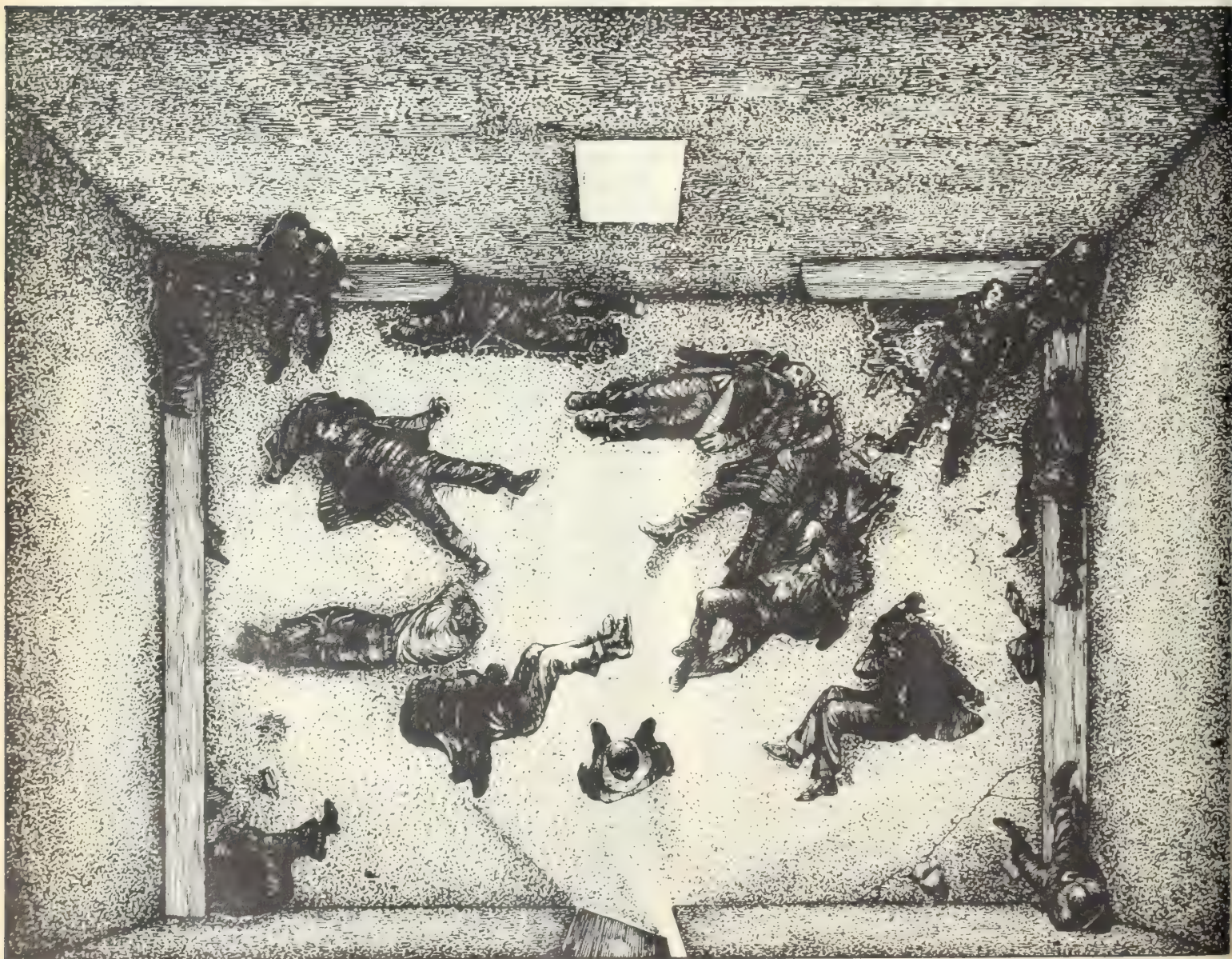
With difficulty I pushed aside two fellows who

were asleep, spread out my jacket, and lay down on the floor. One of my cellmates had been left his watch: it was six in the morning. He said the chief would be there around ten.

I lay there with my eyes closed, but could not fall asleep. Before me was some grotesque mug, bristly, wrinkled, dirty, all bruised and bloody, and reeking of alcohol. Someone swore obscenely, senselessly; another cried out in his sleep and waved his arms.

Toward eight o'clock everyone began to wake up and sprawl on the narrow benches along the walls. Only one, with a swollen face and without coat or hat, continued to lie on the floor. He'd landed in there because in his drunken stupor he'd tried to take someone else's coat. It was quite cold outside and what he'd done with his own coat I do not know.

The news that I had been brought there from Moscow was received without interest. Everyone sat gloomy, hung over, awaiting judgment and punish-





ment. Many were in for fighting, and some had been jailed by their wives. Others were simply drunkards. One, to my amazement, drank his own urine on the spot, so as not to smell of alcohol. This met with general approval. For almost all of them this was not the first time. They asked the duty sergeant for permission to go to the toilet and requested that the door be opened—we couldn't breathe. He responded lazily and called them out one by one to sign their charge sheets.

One fellow alone was in good spirits, a thief around thirty who was full of jokes and wisecracks. I caught sight of him a few hours later, though, really down in the dumps. He had been charged with robbery and was being transferred to prison. It was his second term.

My attention was also caught by a man of respectable appearance. It seemed he had been divorced from his wife, received a new apartment, and returned to his old place for his furniture. Drunk, he did not deny himself the pleasure of smashing up the furniture, and in the process his ex-wife had come in for some punishment, too, I think. That morning he was really cut up about it and spoke of how these days women were so liberated you couldn't say a word to them.

Actually, a strange breed of family has come into being in our country. Any family difficulties are resolved only with the help of the police, and at a somewhat higher level through assistance from the union or party organization. The wives are continually calling in the police; the husbands are put away for a fortnight or for several years and then return to those same wives. And the husbands are no better than their wives when it comes to calling the police and putting others in jail.

At half-past nine the deputy chief of the department arrived in civilian clothes—a major, it was said—and the trial began. People were summoned from the cell one at a time. The major, sitting at a table, would yell, "How much longer must I mess around with you, you wretches! You're spoiling your own life and everyone else's! How long since you've worked? Why do you drink? Why did you have to piss on the street? And what makes you so free with your fists?"

In reply the accused, standing before the major, would mumble something or other. All of them explained that they weren't guilty of anything. The verdicts were speedily reached: for this one a thirty-ruble fine, that one to court to receive fifteen days, and this one to the examining magistrate for criminal proceedings. Only one, after being reprimanded, was freed.

I heard someone mention my name to the major. "That one I won't even look at," the major said and left.

People gradually were led out of the cell—some to await trial until Monday, others to the examining magistrate. Around noon, when the lieutenant

came in for someone else, I told him that I had been sitting there since the night before and no one had explained what I was being held for, why I had been brought there, or what they planned to do with me.

"You don't work!" he answered.

"Even if I don't work, that is not grounds for arresting me and bringing me here. After all, I have nothing to do with you."

"You do!" the lieutenant said and slammed the door.

Several more hours passed. Meanwhile, a man was brought in who was obviously insane, babbling a steady, loud stream of nonsense. In 1965, immediately after my trial, I spent several hours in a cell with an insane man quite like this one. So excruciating had that been for me that it seemed as if I too would lose my mind. But by this time I had become accustomed to such things; I scarcely even took notice of this fellow. I was transferred to an adjacent cell, alone, but then two drunk women were hauled in, and I was returned to the general cell. The two women began screaming at each other.

"You're a bitch!" cried one. "I may not be much, but I work and am of use to the society. What do you do?"

"I'm a prostitute!" yelled the other, though not so confidently.

Around three o'clock the lieutenant suggested that since I had money someone could be sent out to buy me something to eat.

"It's all right to send out," I said, "but you're really obligated to feed me."

"Actually not, we have nothing to do with you," the lieutenant said.

They bought me two bottles of kefir and some rolls. I also asked them to return my glasses, and they did so then and there. Generally speaking, they became more and more obliging toward me. I drank a bottle of kefir and walked about my cell, now in solitude. They had released the madman to avoid having to deal with him.

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### Unanswered questions

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**A**T THIS POINT a new person, just picked up, was led into the duty room. Drunk and with blood smeared all over his face, he thickly urged the lieutenant to take twenty rubles for himself and leave him only enough money for carfare so he might reach his dearly loved children. He had two briefcases with him. They opened up one—there proved to be only a woman's purse in it. They started opening the second, but what was in it I never found out: two young men in street clothes entered the duty room,



and I was immediately brought out of my cell.

The young men greeted me, politely but with reserve. My belongings were collected by them. I acknowledged in writing that food had been procured for me at a cost of one ruble and eight kopeks, and we left.

Outside there waited a green vehicle like a military Jeep without any kind of police markings on it, yet behind the wheel sat a policeman. Once more we drove through the center of town, past the buildings of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and State Security Police and out onto a highway leading to Moscow. It was 4:00 P.M. Saturday, February 21.

"Do you know where we're going?" said the young man in the front seat.

"No," I said. "I usually don't ask where I'm being taken since no one answers me anyway."

"We're going to Borovsk."

"What for?" I asked.

"When we arrive, you'll have a conversation there about that." Having once again proved that one need not bother asking questions about anything, he retreated into silence.

The first lieutenant on duty at the Borovsk district police station met us with a big smile.

"We've met, we're already acquainted," he said to my civilian traveling companions. "And it seems you and I have met." He turned to me, smiling. He probably had remembered me from the time when I had gone there to register.

I was led into a small passage behind the duty room; onto it opened the doors of the detention cells, and one could hear the lively voices and the laughter of the prisoners. The sergeant major shouted encouragingly from the corridor: "The tea's coming soon, boys!" The situation here had a rather patriarchal character to it, and I thought that for me it would be better to do fifteen days with these "boys" than in Kaluga.

I waited ten minutes or so. "This way, please," said the duty officer, and we went upstairs to the office of the deputy chief, a young major with dark hair and a good-natured face. When we entered, he was sitting at his desk. To his right with a morose look sat the public prosecutor in the uniform of a judicial counselor, an exact replica of those district prosecutors whom I had met so often earlier. And to one side sat the young man in civilian clothes who had brought me here. He had given his name as Surin.

I greeted everyone and took a seat next to the desk, and with that the major said: "Have a seat."

Right off he started reproaching me; they had been sending summonses to me for four months and I had not shown up in response to them, so they had been forced to pick me up.

I said that if they had been sending me a summons it had been only very recently, since during the past four months not a single summons from

them had come to me in Vorsino or to my wife's address in Moscow.

"Your wife is no concern of ours. We would not send anything for you to her," the prosecutor said.

"At your place you will find a summons for February 26," the major remarked. "You need not appear for it now since we were summoning you for this discussion."

As it turned out, that police summons—the only one for the entire period of my registration there—had actually come to Vorsino and, contrary to what the prosecutor had said, to my wife's address in Moscow. The summons had been mailed from Borovsk on the evening of February 19, and had reached Vorsino on the twenty-first and Moscow on the twenty-second. In it I was invited to the district office of the police on February 26 "with regard to matters pertaining to registration."\*

Thus, because I had not appeared in Borovsk on February 26 in response to that summons, I was arrested in Moscow late at night between February 20 and early February 21. Here all laws of time and space had been defied, yet that, it seemed, surprised no one.

And furthermore there was a small bit of deception in the summons itself—I had not been summoned concerning questions about my registration.

"Where are you working?" inquired the prosecutor. I did not succeed even in opening my mouth when he repeated, "Where are you working? Why are you registered in the Borovsk district?"

In reply I said that I had registered there, and, had done so with great difficulty, not because I wanted to live and work there, but because I was not permitted to live in Moscow with my wife. I said that I found it absurd in the extreme that a man could be denied permission to live with his wife.

The prosecutor set out on a detailed retort—that many people were registered in this way with them and lived and worked here until their record of conviction had been removed and then they could return to their wives,\*\* but then he sensed that this was diverting him from the main topic and once more insistently repeated several times:

"Where do you work? Where do you work? We have a principle in this country: he who does not work, does not eat!"

"Oh, yes. The very words of Paul the Apostle," I said. By then I had pretty much cheered up, for when I had been brought to Borovsk, I knew that my worst fears had not been realized.

My remark about Paul the Apostle annoyed the prosecutor greatly. "Hold on, why are you giving us

\* All Soviet citizens must be registered with the police in the area in which they live and work. It is extremely difficult to move to major centers such as Moscow and virtually impossible for all former political prisoners.

\*\* When the sentence and exile terms have been served and the former prisoner has no further conviction on his record, the record of his conviction may be removed from his passport—a virtual impossibility for former political prisoners.



his business of Paul the Apostle? We know all that better than you do. Where do you work?"

"Here you are all excited, pressing so hard, not letting me get a word in edgewise," I said, "and look at me. I've just been through such a mess of trouble, and look—I simply radiate good cheer."

At this I smiled as broadly as possible, radiating this good cheer. I wanted to add that, furthermore, amongst the people there had already arisen a proverb, "cheerful as Amalrik," but that proved unnecessary. The prosecutor settled down somewhat and the conversation went on more calmly.

The major joined in: I had been registered in their district for more than four months, and they had not bothered me all that time, but now they wanted to find out how I was and where I was working.

I replied, in the words of Yuri Maltsev, that I worked at my desk. I told them that I was a writer and that was my work and I did not see any need to make up any other and that I belonged to a writers' organization. I was a corresponding member of the Dutch section of the PEN Club.

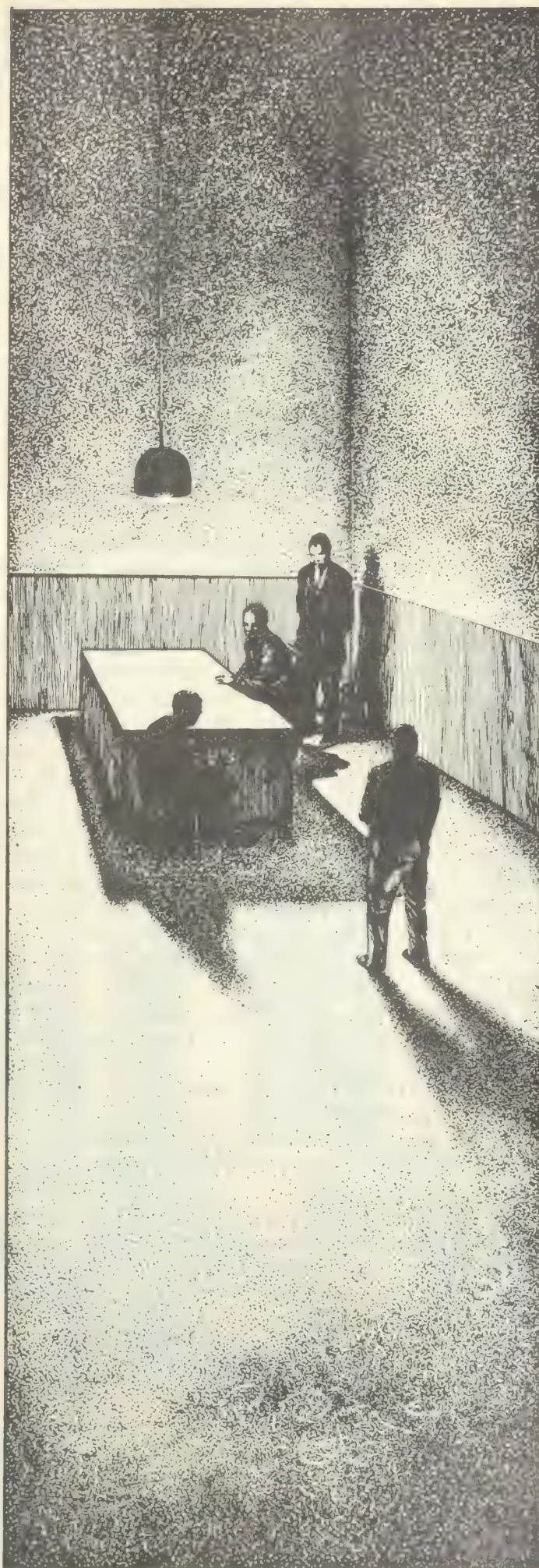
"But that PEN Club is in Holland," the prosecutor said, "and we need to have you working in the territory of the Borovsk district."

I replied that there were certain circumstances still to be considered. My wife and I had applied for temporary visas to go abroad, and until a decision had been made in that matter it made no sense to take a job anywhere; in fact, in our country, people lose their jobs for applying to leave the country. And, it was not out of the question, either, after the kind of treatment I had received in the last twenty-four hours, that we might request a permanent exit visa from the U.S.S.R. In conclusion, I said that I was not in good health, and because of the aftereffects of the suppurative meningoencephalitis which I had had in prison I tired very easily. In prison I had been assigned to the second category of disability, and I could not do any kind of hard labor.

The prosecutor and the major made their objections to me in the course of the conversation roughly in the vein that, since I was not yet abroad, I might find myself a job now, one that was not too difficult. For the present, they said, they were simply talking to me, although they could issue a formal warning. They advised me to go to Moscow and consult with my wife about making arrangements for a job. The prosecutor personally invited me to come to see him for a chat on Friday, February 27, as he also wanted to help me find a job.

I would drop by to see the prosecutor and gladly have a talk with him, I said, but, regarding the formal warning, so far as I had heard, the U.S.S.R. as a signatory to the international convention for the abolition of forced labor.

"It was not for your sake we signed it," the prosecutor said.





**T**HE PROSECUTOR DEPARTED, and the major then began trying to palm off some form on me to make a written explanation about where I lived and why I had no job. I had no intention of writing anything of the sort. At first I spoke calmly about how the prosecutor ordered me to consult with my wife first and how I was the kind of husband whose wife decided everything for him, and, by the way, there are many husbands of this sort in Russia. But, later, after losing my temper somewhat, I stated that I would sign nothing willingly, and if they held me as they were threatening to do I would not talk to them at all.

At that the major put away the form and started filling out a formal warning about finding a job in the course of the coming month. It was expressed in rather vague language, speaking of responsibility but citing not a single article of the criminal code nor any decrees of the Supreme Soviet. Here again they had deceived me when they said at the outset that they wanted to speak with me without formal warning.

Two women were brought in, the witnesses, a middle-aged teacher and a young woman. The teacher kept exclaiming and sighing: How is it possible that you don't have a job! We bring our children up to respect work here! There was something touchingly provincial about her. These days one meets people of this type only in small towns.

I inquired whether they would give me a job in her school.

"We have only a few staff positions, a few teachers and the supervisor of grounds and buildings."

"That's it, supervisor," I said. "I'd make an excellent supervisor of grounds and buildings."

In a reproachful tone, the major said, "You should not make fun of people that way, Andrei Alekseevich."

While this was going on the smiling duty officer had, on the major's instruction, already drawn up a report stating that I refused to give them a written explanation. The witnesses both signed it, asking anxiously, "We won't be put in jail, will we?"

I wanted to say that they would be locked up now if I did not find a job, but I recalled that one should not make fun of people.

We all were polite with one another. Neither the major nor the lieutenant had the slightest enmity toward me; they did what they had been ordered to do, but without any enthusiasm. Only the prosecutor seemed angry, mostly because I had obliged him to work on a Saturday night.

Wishing to do something nice for the major, I said that I told my wife about him and the apt remark he had made about the police.

He looked a bit uneasy, and the fellow in civilian clothes cocked an ear. Several months before, while I was petitioning for registration, I had been sent to Moscow and to Kaluga for permission. At the time I had said to this major, "But this matter could have been settled on the spot; you're just making extra work for yourself."

"It does not matter; there are a lot of us to make up for it," said he, in the words of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya.\*

The fellow in civilian dress also exchanged a few words with me.

"You said you were a writer, didn't you? What do you write?"

"Plays."

"*Will the Soviet Union Survive Until 1984?* Was it you who wrote that?"

"Yes, I. You mean you've heard of it?"

"I heard from Ginzburg when I was in Tarusa on business."

Originally I had wanted to register at Tarusa and even had considered buying a house there, but was prevented from doing so because a KGB office had been opened there.

I remarked to this fellow that in Moscow it had not been the police but operatives of the KGB who picked me up. He hastily said, "I have nothing at all to do with the KGB."

They escorted me downstairs and returned my belongings. I hurried to a bus stop. It was seven o'clock in the evening. Within an hour I was in a railway station and around 10:00 P.M. was already coming into Moscow.

## Watched

**F**ROM THE STATION I tried to telephone Gyusel, but she was not home. Most likely, I thought, she was with the Rubins, with whom she had been waiting for me in the fifth precinct. So I decided to go to their place. On the way I planned to get off at Smolensk Square to buy a bottle of champagne in honor of my release.

The subway car was almost empty. Across from me sat a young man wearing a red scarf; on my left a little further down there was another one.

How depressing it is, after all, I reflected, the way the system molds people. Here are two of the first Soviet people I've come across, and they have

\* A high-school senior and Komsomol member who volunteered in 1941 to go behind the Nazi lines. She was captured after completing her mission, tortured, and publicly executed. Her last words are reputed to have been "There are many of us."



the faces of genuine stool pigeons. With that thought I rose and went to the doors. The train was pulling into Smolensk Square. With a careless look, one of the young men got up, then, after him, the other.

It turned out that the store had already closed. Right around the corner stood one of my traveling companions from the subway. Without a backward look I went down into the subway, and, as luck would have it, the train was just pulling in. The passengers crowded around the doors. I paused on the platform, the doors closed, and the train pulled out of the station. I stayed behind, and so did the two young fellows in red scarves.

One of them approached me and said, with hatred in his eyes, "How long, scum, are you going to play hide-and-seek with us?"

I had heard of instances like this before and was very nervous, as he continued, "They let you go again, you bastard! They're going too easy on you! What's the matter, don't you understand? The party

congress is just around the corner and we're not going to take any risks with our fine congress because of shit like you! Fuck off home and stay there! We won't lay a finger on you at home!"

I looked around—was there a policeman nearby, by any chance? Although recourse to the police at such moments does not help, nevertheless it is at least something to grasp at. I recalled the story of Peter Grigorevich Grigorenko,\* who, in the summer of 1968, was being shadowed by this kind of young man—true, only one—and Peter Grigorevich went to a policeman and said, "Some suspicious individual is following me, and I don't know what he's up to." The policeman resolutely made for the spy and barked, "Who are you? Why are you bothering this citizen?"

\* A mathematician and cybernetics expert and former general, a major leader among political dissidents, Grigorenko has been forcibly imprisoned in various psychiatric clinics since 1969.





"I am not bothering him," the spy said. "I'm a locksmith."

What policeman would stand on ceremony with a locksmith when Peter Grigorevich Grigorenko still had about him the bearing of a general? So the policeman unceremoniously began to rub down the pockets of this "locksmith," and from his breast pocket pulled a red KGB identification book. After a mere glance at it, he changed countenance and now barked at Grigorenko, "What do you want? No one is chasing you! Get on your way!"

On this occasion there was no policeman near at hand. The station was pretty well deserted.

"If one can speak quite frankly," I said amiably, "you have nothing to worry about. I am not planning to interfere with the party congress. I am not going home now; anyway, after those threats, I'd be afraid to stay home alone. So I am going to some friends' place."

"Go on to your friends, make it easy on yourself," the police spy said, along with several obscenities. "We won't touch you here, but on the street it will be just you and me. Then watch out!"

"The trouble is, as I see it, you're not the only one here," I said. "Yeah, there are many of our kind here," he said, again in the words of Zoya Kosmodemyanskaya, and walked off.

I was not sure what the next best move would be. These might not be empty threats. Well known are the instances when KGB agents have beaten up people on the streets. For example, they fractured the head of Nikolai Zhuk, my friend from Magadan, and then for good measure put him into a psychiatric hospital for several months.

My house was right nearby on Vakhtangov Street, next to Smolensk Square, but I did not go home. Riding as far as Revolution Square, I left the subway, crossed Marx Prospect, and turned down Kuznetsky Most toward Telegraph Lane, where the Rubins lived, and where I now hoped to find Gyusel.

As I walked along the now deserted Kuznetsky Street, I heard behind me the footsteps of the police spies, but I did not turn around. Back at Smolensk Square I had conceived a new plan. At the end of Kuznetsky, where it comes out on Lubyanka Square, I stopped by a glass door with a cream-colored drawn curtain, and, although it was dark inside, I pushed the door open and went in.

The inner door proved to be closed. Through another entry into a small lobby there was a table and a box with a slot for papers. Just then, in the inner door with the same cream-colored curtains, a small window opened and through it poked the face of a master sergeant in a uniform with blue tabs.\* This was a KGB reception office.\*\*

\* Light blue has been traditionally the color of the secret police since before the revolution.

\*\* This passage is not purposely unclear. KGB reception offices are almost impossible to find. Amalrik was extremely lucky in finding this one.

"What can I do for you?" he asked politely.

"My name is Amalrik. I would like to speak with one of your senior colleagues."

He summoned the lieutenant on duty, who was quite young and apparently just out of officers' school. The lieutenant requested my passport, looked at it with surprise, and asked me to tell him what was the matter.

It was fairly useless to explain anything to him, but all the same I told him that the KGB agents who had been instructed to follow me were threatening to beat me up and all but kill me. The lieutenant left to call someone on the telephone. When he returned he said, "There are two possibilities: either you write out a statement now, or come back on Monday. The others will be here and can help you."

"What good will that do, if they are going to smash in my head today?"

The lieutenant shrugged. "What, says he, can one do?" Just the same I asked for some paper and wrote out a statement to the KGB telling how their people had abducted me and taken me off to Kaluga, and, on top of that, were now threatening me. As I was writing, a man in plain clothes entered from the street. He had a broad flabby face.

Taking no notice of me, he said to the lieutenant, "How's it going, Vasja? Everything all right with you here?" He went inside, and the lieutenant reappeared at the window. "That's our chief making his rounds of the posts. Do you want to have a word with him?"

I had already finished my statement and pushed it into the slot.

"Why not? I'll speak to him," I replied.

In the corridor leading away from the rather spacious entrance hall, the security chief met me with a joyful smile stretched across his face from ear to ear. We entered a large office with a conference table. I briefly related to him the circumstances of my detention and the day's threats. "Your coworkers are feeling jittery just before the party congress and acting a bit strangely with me."

"There is something odd about what you are saying," he said, smiling even more broadly. "The things you're talking about can get a person put in prison. Very likely they were not our people, but simply a bunch of hooligans of some sort."

"Why would hooligans be concerned about the Twenty-fifth Party Congress?" I retorted. "And, anyway, they knew exactly who I was. Look, I'm not demanding that you admit right here that they're your people, I'm not new to this game. If the authorities have instructed them to intimidate me, then my complaints are pointless. But if they are doing this on their own hook, that's a different matter. If they were ordered only to follow me and they are threatening to beat the hell out of me, then that's already disobeying an order, and it is im-



operative to punish any violation of orders severely. In old Mother Russia we can't get on without strictness. This is not some kind of America we've got here."

Once again the chief smiled broadly and nodded. He liked the bit about strictness. I was reminded of an incident in the life of Voronel: \* his police tails threatened him that if he were "to run" they would "rip his legs off," and the most they would get for it would be a reprimand. "Is it possible to compare this? Here a person without legs and there only a reprimand?" Again the smile from ear to ear. He could make the comparison: a reprimand, or no legs. So?

"All right, all right. We'll report this immediately to our superiors."

I asked them to give me their telephone number so that I could find out about my statement. The security chief, the duty officer, and the master sergeant all hemmed and hawed. "You can find that in any reference book."\*\*

"All right, then give it to me from the reference book. I am not asking for Andropov's telephone number."† (As it happened, my wife had *already* called Andropov that day, trying to find me.) They whispered a good while and gave me the number.

At a quarter to twelve I walked out onto the street. Kuznetsky Most was completely empty. I wondered: could my tails have figured that once I had gone into the KGB I would not come out again?

ONLY AFTER I CAME OUT on Kirov Street did I notice one going along one side of the street and a second along the other side. I was afraid to go to Telegraph Lane by a dark side street, so I walked up to Kirov Gate, turned down Chistye Prudy, and from there walked to Telegraph Lane.†† Near Menshikov Tower I caught up to a middle-aged Jewish couple, the only people out on the street, and for a while I walked just ahead of them so they might be witnesses. I then rushed ahead and into the entrance of the Rubins' six-story building. The elevator was not working. I climbed to the fifth floor on foot. No one had followed me inside, it seemed.

My heart was beating fast. I pressed the doorbell. No one came to the door. I pressed a few more

times. From below I could hear careful footsteps: someone was coming up, then stopped halfway. I rang once more and slowly started down. I met a man in work gloves coming up. I could not make out his face, for, on seeing me, he turned back downstairs. When I passed the elevator in the main entrance, he was there intently tinkering away. It seemed to me just a trifle on the late side to be fixing an elevator at midnight on Saturday.

Outside there was *not* a soul walking by. Ten or so yards away stood a car with a driver inside. I decided to go into the courtyard to see whether there was a light on in the windows upstairs. Possibly the Rubins were home and merely afraid to open the door so late. Scarcely had I turned into the entranceway when I saw that in the courtyard by the exit there stood three persons also looking up at the windows. It was too late to turn back, so I walked straight for them. As I approached, I heard one of them saying in a loud whisper, "Keep calm!"

Stopping a few paces away from them, but far enough in so that the fifth-floor windows were visible, I glanced up and saw that it was dark in the Rubins' apartment.

Not far away lived some other friends of mine, and I resolved to spend the night with them. Walking down Telegraph I heard the car's motor start up. When I entered the completely deserted and dark Zhukovsky Street, an eerie uneasiness came over me. There was a slight frost, and the sidewalks and streets were covered with ice. My heels struck the ice sharply, and just as sharply, I could hear the footsteps behind me. The street seemed endlessly long to me. The footsteps came ever closer, and I even heard someone panting just behind me. Either they wanted to frighten me, or they really planned to beat me up, or maybe they simply were afraid to lose sight of me; whatever the case, they were catching up.

I turned into the courtyard, and hurried up to the second floor. My friends certainly never expected to see me. Exactly twenty-four hours had elapsed since I had left the apartment of our friend the diplomat on Donskoy Street.

In the morning I went to the Rubins' place. It turned out Gyusel was not with them. She had returned home late the night before. The Rubins told about sitting for a long while in the fifth precinct until Kiselev said to Gyusel, "What are you staying around here for? Your husband has been taken to the place of his resident registration." They had not seen me taken away. The next day they had gone to Vorsino, the place of my resident registration. My landlord told them I had not turned up there. They then called Borovsk, and the policeman on duty told them I was not there. (Actually, I was brought in only two hours later.) They asked him to inquire in the district office of the KGB—"The place is locked up," he told them, just as in the *Fantastic Adventures of the Soldier Ivan Chon-*

\* A nuclear physicist and leader of dissident Jewish scientists. He emigrated to Israel on December 28, 1975.

\*\* Although Moscow has a population about the same size as New York's, it produces a telephone book only sporadically and then seldom in printings of more than 150,000. When it appears it has the glamour of a best seller, and when it is sold out the value of a rare book.

† The minister of the KGB.

†† Amalrik is describing a small area almost at the very center of Moscow and near the main post office.



kin.\* Upon returning to Moscow, they started calling the duty officer of the city police, who knew nothing. The telephoning was done by an energetic friend of Gyusel's. When the duty officer hung up, she would call back again. Finally they phoned Andropov; by then I was already en route from Borovsk to Moscow. Andropov's secretary was pleasant enough and said: "I sympathize with you but we have nothing to do with this matter. Put pressure on the police." He acted as if he could not place my name.

The telephone at the Rubins' was disconnected. I called Gyusel from a telephone booth and found she had left already. As we were getting a cab, not far off there lounged a fellow whom the Rubins had

\* A Soviet *Good Soldier Schweik*, a brilliantly humorous satire of the Soviet bureaucracy and military written by Vladimir Voinovich, unpublished in the U.S.S.R. Voinovich is a writer, playwright, and movie scenarist who was expelled from the writers' union in February 1974.

noticed the night before and christened "pitcher snout." Hardly had we gotten into the cab when the driver, a young fellow but with a look of one who had been around, said with surprise, "We are being followed."

Behind us rode a car with the license "OBI"; neither from Moscow nor Kaluga, it was the very one in which I had been taken to Kaluga. For the duration of the party congress KGB "workers" apparently had been brought in from various districts to deal with the crisis situation. KGB operatives of all varieties, accustomed to comfortable office jobs, were assigned to surveillance work on the streets, just as scholars are sent out to harvest potatoes. Later on, in the Arbat, an older man of most imperious bearing walked and then ran in pursuit of us like a youngster.

I did not bother to memorize the license numbers of the cars which followed us. They could be





changed at will, and on the following day the license plate might be taken off altogether. A friend told me that once he had been tailed by a car with different license numbers front and back. While settling up with the taxi driver, I remarked, "On top of this ruble, you are going to get some entertainment. Now they will interrogate you about what was said here."

### Interference on the line

**I**NASMUCH AS I COULD NOT be found anywhere on the preceding day, a rumor went around that I had disappeared without a trace. I rang up correspondents from the Associated Press and Reuters and asked them to come around and told them everything that had happened to me.

Vitaly Rubin was not shadowed when he left my place, and when Gyusel arrived she said that no one had followed her either. But now she had only to go out to the store for a tail to materialize on the spot. Two automobiles were staked out near the house, one on the street and the other in the courtyard, with four or five men in each. Gyusel witnessed a curious scene: into our street drove a large automobile with foreign plates; it stopped right next to the car full of agents and switched on its high beams. Their pale faces were illuminated and they fussed about feverishly. The foreign car instantly backed up, turned and drove off. Most likely somebody had simply driven in to turn around, but the effect was quite funny.

The car stayed on duty all night. We consoled ourselves with the thought that although it was not very pleasant for us in the house under siege, for them it must have been still worse in the stuffy, smoke-filled car. Gyusel did see in the store, though, that one of them, while dogging her heels, managed to buy a bottle of vodka. In the hope that we might be left in peace, we decided to leave Moscow the following day, on the eve of the party congress.

Late at night Andrei Dimitrievich Sakharov\* rang on the telephone and asked whether I might come to see him the next day. I promised that I could, but as a matter of fact I was somewhat afraid that a trap might be set for me on the way to his place. I had not excluded the possibility that this surveillance had been set up in relation to our possible combined actions before the party congress. I now think, rather, that they were afraid of my steps I might take in connection with our intention to leave for the U.S.A. or Holland.

The next day Sakharov called back to suggest that perhaps it was not worth it "to tempt fate." Over the telephone he read an appeal for amnesty

\* A noted Soviet nuclear physicist and major activist for human rights. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for peace in 1975.

for political prisoners that he was proposing to make at the time of the opening of the party congress. In the middle of it, we were cut off. I called back—busy. After a few minutes he managed to get through, and though his voice was barely audible we finished the conversation satisfactorily.

Later in the day I called the KGB reception office; nobody answered. Then I rang up the head of the office, and once more repeated that their operatives were threatening me. He immediately asked, "Who gave you my telephone number?"

All that day, February 23, if we went anywhere by taxi, right behind us came a car; if we went on foot, the cars stopped some distance away. No one came up to us or said anything. The Arbat looked like a street in an occupied city: at every step were police and military patrols and types in street clothes, quite unambiguous as to line of work. The area was full of official vehicles. Gyusel went into a sporting-goods store to buy a knapsack. Instead of the usual saleswoman behind the counter there were strange men and another stranger at the cash register.

In the evening, laden with books and food—one even has to take along milk when going to the country—we set off for the Kiev station. On the train at the end of the car appeared the same cast of characters, but I did not look in their direction. At Vorsino none of them, however, got off the train.

To reach our village one must walk about one-and-a-half kilometers partly by way of a dark glade. As luck would have it, many people got off the train and we walked in large groups. Several men, who stopped ahead of us, as if waiting for someone, put us on our guard, but it is possible that they had nothing to do with us. In Vorsino we had no sense of surveillance or being spied on, and I sat at home and calmly wrote these notes. Of course, I did not go to see the prosecutor, but sent him a telegram that if he had pressing business with me, he could drive up to see me himself.

Thus we walked those one-and-a-half kilometers without incident, and around 11:00 P.M. we were tapping on the dark windows of the house in which I have a room. The next day, February 24, in Moscow, began the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

**W**HAT FRIGHTENED ME most about the episode was the nervousness of the authorities. At each new point in the affair it was as if they did not know what to do with me. The divisional inspector of the police had dropped by Vakhtangov Street on February 18, excitedly asking where I might be. On the nineteenth they sent me an invitation from Borovsk for February 26. Still earlier, by listening in on telephone conversations, they found out that on the eve-



ning of the twentieth I was to be out for dinner, and they grabbed me as I was leaving. For some reason they took me to the fifth precinct and spent a long time finding out what to do with me next. For some other reason they drove me to Kaluga and there again for a long time "coordinated," among themselves. On the twenty-first they took me to Borovsk without returning my belongings as if they had intended to jail me there for ten to fifteen days—and unexpectedly released me after having given me only an absurd warning and an equally absurd invitation to see the prosecutor on the day of the opening of the congress. They advised me to travel to Moscow to consult with my wife, and then and there set up police surveillance accompanied by threats to stay at home at Vakhtangov Street whence earlier they had driven me out by all these same measures. And, finally, two cars and eight to ten men attached to me—no one I knew in Moscow was subjected to anything comparable during those days.

For what purpose was it all? If they saw me as some kind of obstacle to the congress, would it not have been more simple to propose earlier that I leave Moscow? (V. Voinovich, after reading this manuscript, suggested rewriting this sentence as follows: "If they saw me as some kind of obstacle to the congress, would it not have been more simple to cancel the congress?") Gyusel and I ourselves had wanted to leave the day before the congress and had discussed it at home.

Generally speaking there is in the actions of the KGB at first glance something odd. Their entire treatment of me from the time of my return from exile leaves the impression that they had been intentionally provoking me to actions regarded by them as hostile instead of giving me a chance to live quietly and not bother them. But even in their desire to remove me from Moscow, they acted strangely—they destroyed our country house in the Ryazan region so that only parts of the walls remain, as if a bomb had hit it.

Back in 1970 Boris Shragin\* remarked that to the extent that the Soviet civil-rights movement began to emerge from the underground and openly declare itself, so into the underground began to

\* A professor of education. He emigrated to the United States in March 1974.

retreat the KGB, and its methods started to assume an ever more criminal character, even from the point of view of that state whose security it was called on to protect. By its actions, the KGB resembles not only an Arab terrorist group such as Black September, not only the Sicilian Mafia, but quite definitely some teen-age gang; not only do they incarcerate healthy people in psychiatric clinics, not only do they kidnap them off the streets, severely beat them or threaten with such beatings, and poison them with drugs, but they also destroy and burn down country cottages, steal money, slash the tires of automobiles, spread slander by word of mouth and in print, send out anonymous letters in obscene language and use obscene language in like manner on the telephone.

For many years now I have been observing these people and have come to the conclusion that their dominant characteristic is a kind of childishness, or, more accurately, juvenility; they have the cruelty of teen-age juveniles which comes from immaturity, the juvenile inability to understand anyone else's feelings, the juvenile inclination to deny everything that is "not mine," the juvenile dominance of emotions over reason, the juvenile deceitfulness and cunning, and, most important, the juvenile vulnerability and touchiness. It is impossible to wound anyone so mortally by a word as a KGB agent; no one reacts so morbidly to any jibe as they do. That readiness to take offense, incidentally, that peculiar presumption of injury, is characteristic of policemen in countries where the police play an exclusive role. Amongst our own KGB personnel it is really excessively developed.

Anything to do with me they simply cannot take calmly. Apparently I wounded them deeply, somehow or other, the minute they laid eyes on me. Back in Magadan their worthy colleague Andrei Vasilievich Pustakov said to me, "You hit us below the belt."

Yet perhaps there is in their actions both calculation and cunning, also rather childish at that. By exaggerating every incident of dissidence and even provoking people, the KGB wants to show the party chiefs its importance and its indispensability to them. The KGB of course is indispensable to this system, but at times it inflicts more harm on it than good. □



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# AMERICAN NOTES

An English biographer follows in the steps of Dickens, Trollope, and Shaw

**B**EFORE MY FIRST VISIT to New York in 1968, I had read a good deal about it, but nothing prepared me for certain everyday phenomena—for the hellish smoke that rises through holes in the street as if from some unimaginable inferno below, or for the electric shocks that stung me each time I crossed a nylon-carpeted room to open a door, switch on a light, even stroke a cat.

I had been dreadfully spoilt on that first visit. At intervals the telephone would sing out, and there was my friendly publisher with his list of friendly questions. What about fitting an extra lunch into my hectic schedule? Could I, in the next ten days or so, manage to sign one copy of my book? How was I weathering the drastic strain? Between these calls I slept, went for walks, saw a few films, wrote some letters, slept again. In restaurants I was given drinks looking like heavy water or tropical salads—things I had heard about but never seen. Every day I was positively required to do nothing, and, if I murmured something practical about sales or promotion, was stared at as if I had lapsed into bad taste.

When people spoke to me of the "excitement" of New York, I felt nonplussed. In my three-week stay I had clocked more hours of uninterrupted sleep than anywhere else in the world. No wonder I enjoyed the place so much. It was like returning to the pram. The gentle security of it all wrapped me round. Had I missed something? Was my experience unique?

My next two visits reinforced the same conclusions: New York is a sleepy place, and curiously old-fashioned. On my most recent stay, however, I struggled to keep awake, for this time there was research to do, and I was on my own.

There is a danger in the brief journey followed by the long essay—a danger that one will automatically be misunderstood. Of course, since controversy is the stuff of sales, no one wishes to deny his readers the pleasure of a good misunderstanding. In an Ameri-

can context there are heady precedents for this, preeminently that of Dickens, who never retracted a syllable of Scadder, Chollop, Mrs. Hominy, and Jefferson Brick. George Bernard Shaw, who saw himself as a literary godson of Dickens, wrote of *Martin Chuzzlewit*: "The truth of the matter is that writers like Dickens are privileged to tell the truth without malice or partiality. Only the Jefferson Bricks imagine that America is insulted when her visitors are as hard on her as they are on their own country."

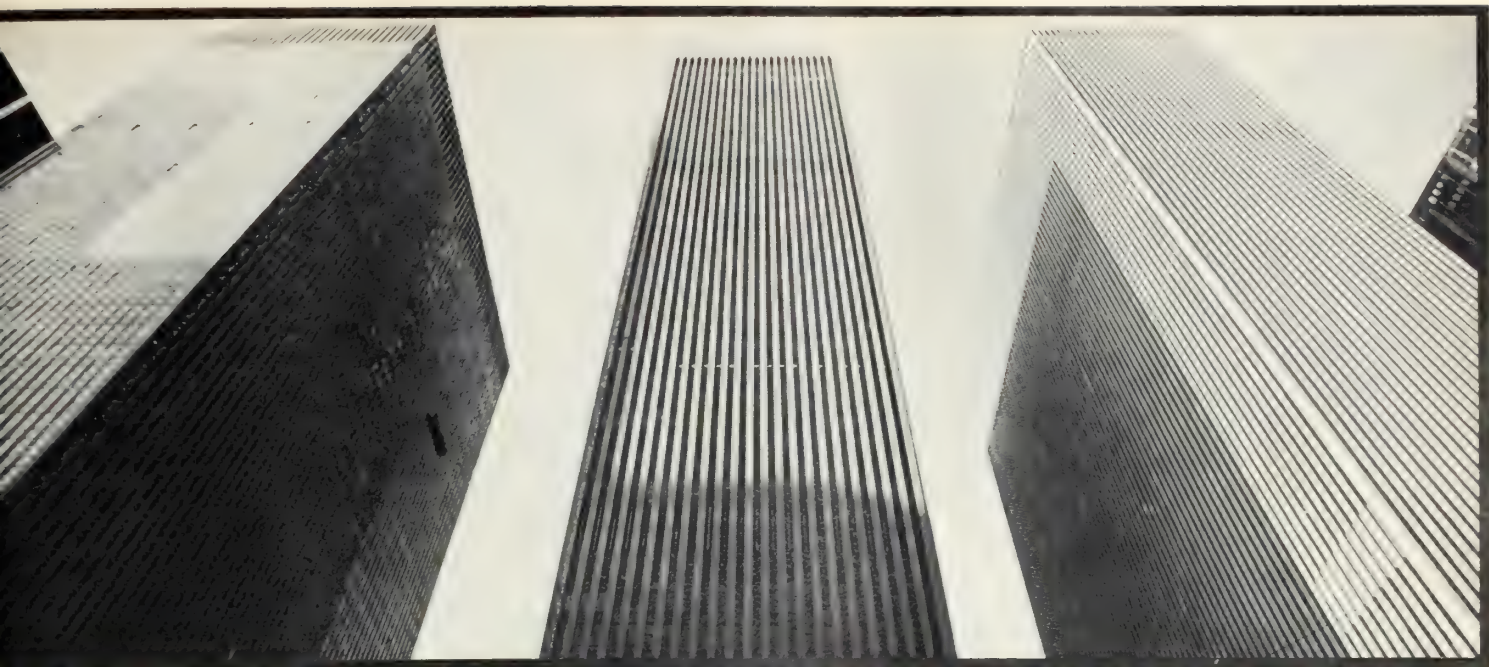
In *The Political Madhouse in America and Nearer Home*, Shaw pleaded not guilty to the incivility of "wantonly holding up my sensitive American friends to British ridicule and contempt." The hundred-percent American was "harmless and well-meaning" compared to his European or Japanese counterpart. Besides: "The main points of my harangue obviously apply to England as urgently as to the United States." Even though it was so easy to "get a rise out of an American by telling him something about himself which is equally true about every human being on the face of the globe," Shaw was resolved "that not a single word should pass my lips which could give the slightest offence to an American."

Having explained himself, Shaw set about the business of telling Americans something "for their own good." His audience in 1933 learned that their Constitution was a charter of anarchism and that the anarchist's paradise was Hollywood. In place of a history, America had talk, endless bombinating piffle and hot air. So much for the past: for the future there was, nevertheless, some hope. In the manic hospitality and rage for publicity that distinguished Americans from Europeans, Shaw detected an irrepressible social feeling that "may turn into volcanic political genius if it gets mixed with brains and knowledge." Even without brains and knowledge, their "blind political instinct" had driven them to do the right things. At home, guided by their financiers, they had become a "wonderful night-clubby sort of nation" and in doing so had demon-

Michael Holroyd is the author of biographies of Hugh Kingsmill, Lytton Strachey, and, most recently, Augustus John.

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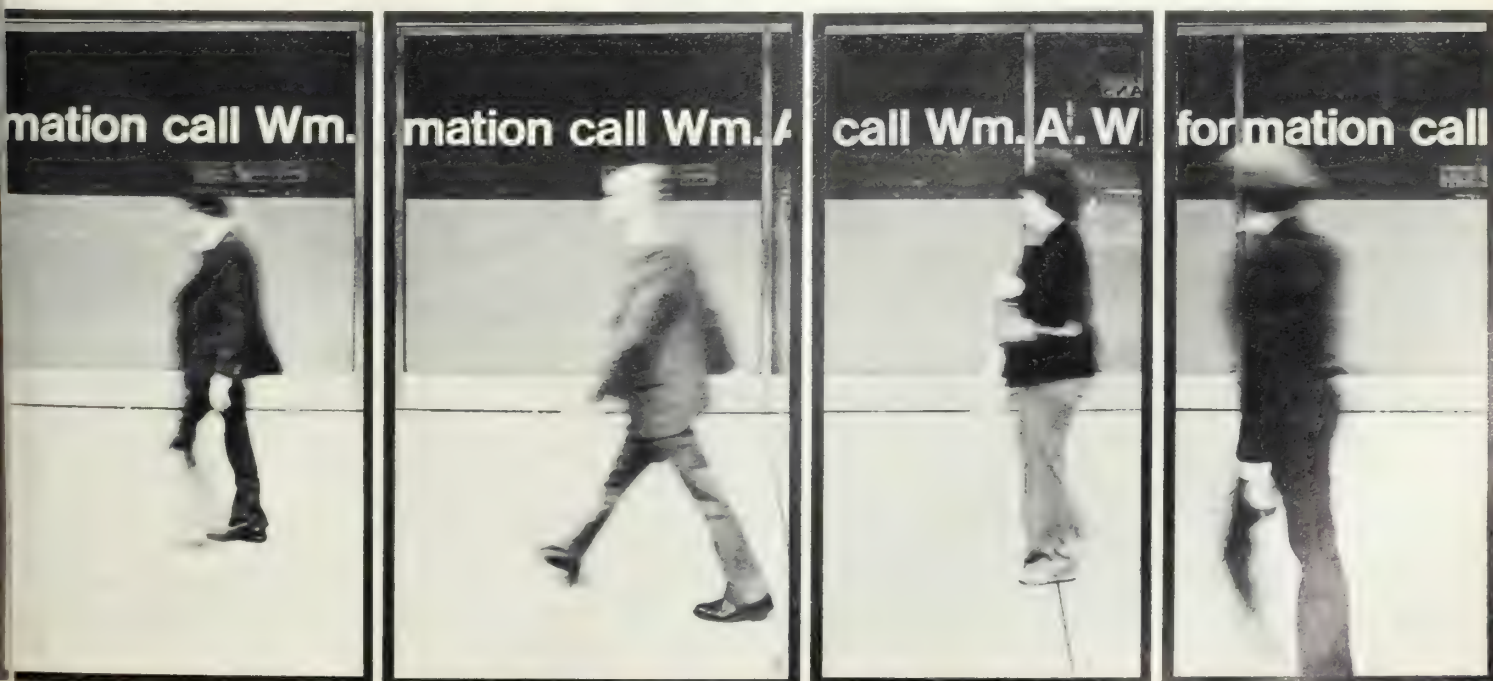
rated to the world the immense futility of capitalism. Abroad, with their money and advice, they had generously helped to establish communism in Russia. Not bad, without pains and knowledge, for a start.

Shavians were delighted, but Americans generally were not so pleased. They suspected that he didn't like them, though what he really didn't like was the American political system with its let's-do-nothing Congress. "That is the worst of you Americans," he said. "You are commonly nice people personally; but you have no notion of practical affairs."

In the 1930s it seemed as if America had been aping for too long whatever Europe was doing. But now Europe, especially Britain, tries to copy America and does it very badly. Criticism of America may, therefore, be one of the best ways of sparing her this silly caricature.

## The phantom pedestrian

**I**N AMERICA MY IDENTITY comes under serious siege. My nonexistence, however, is not principally as a biographer, but as a visible living person. I am in America a pedestrian. Pedestrians, of course, come in two classes: the quick and the dead. The former can be seen in white shorts and T-shirts; the second category appears to take care of the rest. I have walked through large cities at midday without ever seeing a regular pedestrian. In Washington, D.C., almost the only ones seem to be policemen. They are fitted with whistles, and sound like a vigorous dawn chorus. I remember, too, in Southern Illinois my excitement, like Robinson Crusoe's, at spotting a shoeprint in the snow, though it was only my own print from the previous





week. At all times, everywhere, the streets are alive with cars that have evolved the independent life of a superior breed. The attitude toward pedestrians varies from place to place. In Austin, Texas, they are much feared. In the country people keep troupes of dogs to drive them off should they decide to attack. But any car that happens to nudge one is liable to atrocious penalties, for, as in some game reserve, the authorities are touchingly anxious for them not to become extinct. Elsewhere—in Beverly Hills, for instance—pedestrians are treated more abruptly and may be picked up at any moment on suspicion of walking with intent.

It was as a self-employed, foreign pedestrian that my extinction became almost complete. On my first day in America, I went to a bank. They glared at me in anguish as I pushed money out of my pockets. It was, I see now, a pornographic scene—the naked notes spilling out from my clothing, lying exposed on the counter for all to see. Eyebrows thickened, hands went to revolvers. “Whose is it?” I was asked.

New York is rich—you have only to hear the size of her overdraft to know just how rich—but no one ever carries or is seen with money: not too much money, anyway. I was hustled to a corner, where the questioning began.

This questioning was largely a matter of forms, an armful of which was advanced to meet my case. But none of them fitted. Name: we took a long time to settle that, and it didn’t, I felt, improve my chances. Then came the question that, in one manner or another, on telephones, at libraries, in hotels, everyone would ask me: “Whom do you belong to?” Now, it’s a sad business (though of my own making), but I belong to no one. In the Great Computer, however, there is no slot for pathos. If I didn’t belong, I didn’t exist. And at that stalemate we languished several days.

Fortunately, I had chosen a bank in the same building as my publisher. My visits with him to establish my identity were so prolonged that one of my cross-examiners in the bank assumed that I was employed by him, and entered this information on one of her forms. I grasped at the indignity with gratitude, and so did the computer. I was given a checkbook with my name handsomely printed on it, and my triumph lasted until I realized that no one would accept my checks—not even other branches of the same bank. Restaurants, hotels, shops should all hang up the same sign: “WE DO NOT TRUST YOU.” For that is the truth. They have been, I was told, cheated and robbed so often that now they look on every-

one as a crook. So the crook is victorious, for, to defeat him, we have accepted his standards.

My next experiment was with travelers’ checks. Wherever I went, I would approach one of the palatial banks with these checks. But they were not so easy to convert into money as I had believed. Bank officials would at once ask for my eye-dee (meaning, confusingly, identity card). I didn’t have one. The problem was: how to officially identify someone who has not been recognized as having an official existence? Letters, books, membership cards of the Automobile Association, the New York Public Library, British Museum, London Library, National Book League—all useless. My driving license, being out of date and with the wrong address, was a positive handicap: I was clearly no motorist. At one superbank even my passport was judged inadequate, since it failed to list my weight, seemed uncertain about the color of my eyes, presented a photograph (nine years old) of some accomplice, and mentioned a “peculiarity” so microscopic and intimately placed as to be valueless for bank purposes. Yet if I were not to be extinguished, I needed money. After all, this was my own money I was trying to recover.

Using the contents of my briefcase and in my most tiresome and elaborate manner, I set out to construct a convincing self-portrait of a blue-eyed biographer. Warming to this task, calling unsuccessfully for a *Who’s Who* (when will that book be of use?), adding one ingenious circumstantial detail to the next, I became so self-immersed as to overlook the lack of corresponding interest from my bank audience. Not liking my work to be dismissed in this way, I accused them of forsaking reality for empty procedure. I had built up a formidable prima facie case. But, as one of the cashiers gently explained, “We couldn’t care less.”

It is a tribute to my desperation that I did cash my travelers’ checks, on agreeing to have the transaction filmed for possible use by the police. You may judge how infuriating I had become when (once the money was in my hands) I asked whether I might buy this film for repeat performances at banks all over the country.

What I really needed was a bank card. Without this I could make no airplane reservations and was barred from hotels. So, stumbling through a musical dog show playing there that day, I returned to the bank. The building was full of posters and pamphlets soliciting me to take one of these bank cards but when I tried to do so I found I was not entitled to one. This time my paralysis came from the lack of a Social Security number. Once again I did not exist.



Scattering the dogs, I fled upstairs. Since was becoming so difficult to get my money, and no one would accept my checks, I had arranged to make air and hotel reservations through my publisher, repaying him with money from downstairs. This system exploded when the publisher's computer failed to "accept" me. It said I had no "code." But if I did not exist, I argued, surely there was a need to invent me—otherwise to whom had my generous advance on royalties been paid? This question proved curiously telling, and a fictional entity, equaling myself, was created—a numbered and nameless being (though I followed the courtesy title of Michael Holroyd) which everyone seemed to prefer to the old familiar me. Once this operation had been performed upstairs, I took the idea downstairs, where, following some amused discussion, it was successfully repeated. After nine weeks, upstairs, downstairs, I was reborn.

**V**ITALITY AND HUMOR are now on the wane in America. Everything is solemnly categorized, segregated, polished up by fashion. When I went to a bookstore at Harvard to inquire after Shaw's *Adventures of a Black Girl in Search of God*, I was directed to the "Black Studies" and the "Women's Studies" sections where, the book not having recently been reissued, I did not see it prominently displayed. When I asked, bearing in mind the sex and color of the author, whether I should buy Men's or White Studies, I was suspected of joking—though why one joke should be better than another I don't know.

To British eyes, the American appears to have two families. There is his "regular" family, such as we are used to seeing interrupting *The Forsyte Saga* or *Jennie* every few minutes with their eulogies to soap or potato chips, and there is his office family. His second wife (if there is no second wife) is his secretary, his second family his employees. God is Present, sensed but not seen, above the clouds on the thirty-fifth floor. In an atmosphere where money is not freedom of action but an imitation of immortality, this second family may be more important insofar as it absorbs more time and energy than mom and the kids. The adults of America are the machines. They are very fine. If you want anything done, ask a machine. Machines buy and sell, produce, convey, communicate. They keep you alive, or don't. No wonder human beings, that old species that Shaw suspected would have to be scrapped and supplanted by something more efficient, are now almost redun-

dant. To make a secret of their decline has become a national preoccupation. A popular method is for Americans, so far as possible, to resemble their machines in much the same way as Englishmen are said to resemble their dogs. They congregate in windowless shells of modern architecture, bathed in homogenized lights (some of which can never be switched off), protected from any contact with the earth to which we all return, from burglars, rapists, murderers, pedestrians. No one may speak without signing a form, no one may enter without submitting to search and waving his eye-dee like a drowning swimmer.

Once upon a time there were two types of problem: the avoidable and unavoidable. The art of life lay in distinguishing between these two. Americans (and, I suspect, ourselves) excel at the former. Most of the problems

**"It would astonish most Americans to learn that the paper napkin and glass of melting ice that comprise their traditional hors d'oeuvre baffles many foreigners."**





Michael Holroyd  
AMERICAN  
NOTES

you hear being debated could easily be solved between breakfast and lunch; but then—and this is our real predicament—what to do between lunch and tea? On average, Americans watch six vacuum-packed hours of television a day, but that still leaves several hours when they are plainly unplugged from their sets. It is the threat of this emptiness that agitates people so acutely, the time when you switch off from automatic pilot to finding your own way. For where do we tell ourselves that we are going? The answer to that may be so bleak that we prefer to obliterate it, lumber the road with phantom rocks and boulders that cannot be removed because, in any real sense, they do not exist.

From politics to academe, the manufacture of these problems is a flourishing industry. It is assisted by newspapers. Various people, while I was in America, brandished firearms in the vicinity of the President. He was a difficult target, one of the quick. Unaided, he trips, dodges, lurches, hurtles, staggers, falls from place to place, “meeting with” the people and spending their money. It is impossible to tell whether or not he has been hit, poor man, every few hundred yards. No wonder people speak of his courage. But those ladies who lined up to watch him limp and bluster along, and who waved their guns (like flags) as if to orchestrate his progress were not honestly trying to kill him. Why should they, unless there was no other way of achieving what they wanted? What they wanted was notoriety; a public notoriety to overcome their feeling of inadequacy—that same sense of individual nonexistence that threatened me. Some commentators remarked on how fortunate it was that they had missed their tripping, staggering, lurching target. But they were not aiming for Ford. They aimed at the cover of *Time* and *Newsweek*, at the front page of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*—and they hit a bull’s-eye.

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High-pressure systems

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**T**HERE IS SPACE IN AMERICA, and lots of weather, lots of food. The space is not all empty and the food not all good; but the weather is always theatrical. It is reported incessantly on the radio, and flashed to us from street corners. Weather has become the focus of the best and (together with some Westerns) most authentic television programs. Hurricanes, blizzards, “line storms,” vast snow, severe warnings—there is plenty of live drama staged each evening by satellite. The television companies

compete with one another to give you the best weather, providing not just the information, but the experience. From your room with its neutral climate of air conditioning or central heat, you may feel the high- and low-pressure systems, the tropical heat, frigid squalls pass over you in the space of a few seconds. Almost all this is better than British (to say nothing of Irish) weather, and much more accurately prophesied.

The food is described less accurately. Though often reported as “hearty,” it is usually bland. Everyone knows the generosity of American meat, but few have written about those meals that, beginning with coffee, appear to European minds to proceed backward. It would astonish most Americans to learn that the paper napkin and glass of melting ice that comprise their traditional hors d’oeuvre baffle many foreigners. Some people will advise you to “eat ethnic,” but this can be just as difficult as it sounds.

What baffles, even panics, the Americans is wine. Wine is in some places a fearful substance, to be bought only in brown paper. In North Carolina, I was transformed into a leering, shambling, dipsomaniac monster, capable of loping off on a four-mile hunt to track down a brown-paper glass of wine. Elsewhere, in nondry states, wine is treated with extreme deference. Carried in the bottle as if it were an explosive, it is poured, with agonizing slowness, into tiny sherry glasses to be sipped as a cocktail.

Eating in restaurants, living in expensive one-night motels, brought me up against the extreme politeness of the Americans. American politeness is so relentless that it has become one of the chief causes of American violence. I had come across a similar paradox in Ireland, where they do it on the roads. Irish motorists generally drive with extreme caution, seldom exceeding (even for a red light) fifteen miles an hour. Their remorselessness stimulates the few others to feats of extreme recklessness. In a similar fashion, American pornography proceeds from the gigantic rest room of American euphemisms. In England, politeness is a weapon, implanting guilt; in Ireland it has become an alibi, the charming explanation for doing nothing. But in America, the foreigner is conscious of being bathed in a milky bath of politeness. It is a push-button politeness, supplied in a few plastic formulas—“Have a nice day,” “You’re welcome,” and so on. This computer talk, traveling from the airport into the house, has become the language of human beings. The pseudo-kindness, authentic boredom, drives people mad. □



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# AT LARGE IN EAST AFRICA

Report from a traveler in an antique land

**K**ENYA. FOURTEEN MILLION people. Per capita income, \$169; no compulsory education (a fee of some sort is generally charged). City laborers in Nairobi earn about a dollar a day, those in agriculture half a dollar. More than a quarter of the children in the nation suffer from some form of malnutrition, according to a World Bank report, and the population is expected to double in the next twenty-five years. Less than 10 percent of the rural people has available an adequate water supply. It's a country astride the equator on the Indian Ocean but mostly semiarid, uncommonly beautiful, with views of the two highest mountains in Africa and so much else in the way of variety that although it's by no means large as African countries go, it seems grand and large. Except on the coast and in the Kikuyu, formerly "White," highlands, the look of the place to an American much resembles the redlands of New Mexico or the wide plains of Oklahoma forty years ago. New Mexico, that is, with elephants, and the Oklahoma of the dust bowl. To a drastic degree the country is blowing away through deforestation—charcoal burning, slash-and-burn farming, and even the hungry foraging of the elephants, which since the recent drought find their grass gone. Three years ago a rough census came up with a figure of 167,000 elephants only a third of which live within the 5 percent of the country that

has been gazetted as game reserve. Probably 1,000 of these have been poached for their ivory each month since—ivory worth \$45 a pound.

East Africa, it's said, is where tourists go who like animals better than (black) people. Less vividly, ethnically "African" than some of the nations on the west coast—and only one-fifth as populous as Nigeria, for instance—Kenya seems less formidably foreign. About 40,000 white residents have remained; 80,000 "Asians" of Indian or Pakistani origin still constitute the mercantile class. The takeover of the great coffee and tea plantations (in Isak Dinesen's day Africans were not allowed to own land) has been gradual, financed by British government grants, indeed. Enough compensation is paid that the white farmers can retire quietly to the coral beaches of Mombasa and Malindi on the coast if they wish. Nevertheless, several hundred thousand good acres are still farmed by individual whites, not to mention the corporate pineapple and sisal and cotton plantations and beef ranches one runs into here and about. In a country where malnutrition is rampant, where close to 90 percent of the land is scarcely arable or not arable at all, the white apple-growers of Kitale still bury part of their crop to keep the price up. Nairobi is a city with good restaurants, and beggars stretched on the sidewalk outside. The Muthaiga Country Club is as

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*Members of the Samburu tribe killing sheep on the Lorogi Plateau in the Rift Valley of Kenya. The tribesmen suffocate the sheep, then slit the animal's throat to drain its blood, which, together with milk, is a staple of their diet.*





crisply Victorian as ever; and your typical bachelor British accountant fulfilling a two-year stint employs a houseboy who for ten shillings a day and two pounds of "staff meat," given him to take home to his wife for the week, will address the bwana as Bwana.

For weeks I rode buses, partly on a camping safari, because I, too, had come to look at the animals. Having written about North American wildlife, I wanted to find out if there was something to say about these floral giraffes and priapic rhinos, the airborne extravaganza of kites, storks, and vultures—such a profusion of life that the sunbird family alone is a whole brilliant constellation, and hyenas needed to be invented just to dispose of the detritus of it. Apart from retailing a few late discoveries in animal behavior, however, there seemed to be nothing fresh to convey. To write about animals anywhere nowadays is to write of the end of the world; yet I don't necessarily believe in the end of the world. One no longer travels to Africa to experience "where we came from"—a dark continent of savages, the pool of the past—but, rather, the pool of the future. If there aren't more of *them* than *us* there soon will be; one has a humming sense of the world born anew. Four hundred million people, 45 percent of them under the age of fifteen; not the earth's densest population but the fastest growing. Thirty countries ten or twenty years old, seemingly intent upon recapitulating two centuries' worth of Latin-American coups and countercoups within a couple of decades. So much is going on that the life of a new visionary on the order of David Livingstone would be swallowed up all over again in exploring it.

What would absorb him this time around would not be the geography of Africa but the people, not the specter of slavery but hunger. One either believes that life is precious or not. It isn't a decision, simply a discovery one makes about oneself—precious and wretched, perhaps, but the operative word is *precious*, and if the response is going to be yes, then the urgency of this continent strikes home. Out on the road, seeing from the bouncing bus a woman pounding cassava roots with pestle

and mortar, hoeing yams in her shamba with

a baby strapped to her hip and her older kids shooing the goats off, it seems as though time might take care of everything. But my bus broke down in Isiolo, a hot, famine-struck town on the edge of the northern desert scrubland that takes up two-thirds of Kenya, and I was so importuned by beggars of every description, beggars so desperate—gray, listless children, crawling men supporting themselves on sticks, women who'd carried a fifty-pound sack of charcoal six or eight miles on their heads for a couple of shillings—that I had nowhere to turn. These people were starving.

**"So much is going on in Africa that the life of a new visionary on the order of David Livingstone would be swallowed up all over again in exploring it."**

## Sudden danger

**T**HE ADVENTURE OF African travel is no longer provided by lions and charging buffalo ("buff," Hemingway called them). Instead, it's the sudden roadblocks, the whimsy of new regulations at the border crossings—a police force and army created almost overnight. At a dinner party one can spend hours with several old Africa hands hearing nothing but their arrest stories. Six weeks in a minibus trying to get across the Central African Republic. A rifle butt through the windshield in Uganda. Sitting there with a lapful of broken glass has been enough to unstring a good many Africa enthusiasts. Even in Kenya it is becoming commonplace for a European whose property has excited the avarice of a government official to be ordered to quit the country within twenty-four hours. Traditionally, Africa has attracted Europeans with something missing in them, some bit of the backbone gone, and its sternness together with its abundance stiffened and also soothed them. But the sternness is becoming a problem now. Only the other kind of expatriate—the alley cat—thrives.

In 1967 Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, emerging from the first convulsions of independence (two attempted coups in 1964, which the British had to come in and help suppress), formed the East African Community. Currency, mail service, telecommunications, taxing, and transport authority were to be shared. The posts and East African Airways have



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worked out well, but the rest of the community's cooperative ventures are languishing. Because of its success at drawing tourists and foreign investment, Kenya's money is twice as valuable as Tanzania's in under-the-counter foreign exchange, and, peevishly, Tanzania has been seizing Kenya-licensed vehicles that cross the border. As early as 1972 Idi Amin of Uganda was bombing the Tanzanian villages fronting his border, and lately has laid claim to a huge slice of Kenya territory, which (if combined with the Kenyan land that Somalia, to the northeast, claims) would reduce the country to the size of a peanut.

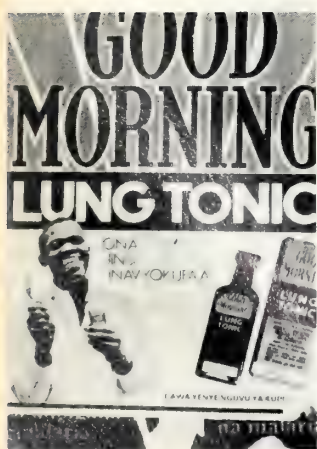
Amin is ridiculed in the Nairobi newspapers and generally described in Kenya as a primitive. President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania bitterly characterizes him as "Vorster's dream"—the sort of black bogeyman whom South Africa's prime minister can point to to justify continued white rule. Nyerere is a sober idealist who dresses in a severe-looking tunic and, as president, took out a loan from the bank to build a house for himself, eschewing the colonial grandeur of State House in Dar es Salaam. He has none of the raffishness that Amin and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya share, nor the bloody-mindedness which Amin flourishes and Kenyatta sometimes hints at circumspectly (usually in Swahili). Kenyatta is no Amin, however; he is more of a poor man's Haile Selassie, an Independence hero who in his eighties has gone venal and sour, and there is the possibility of succession problems when he dies that will compare to Ethiopia's difficulties once Selassie was eclipsed. So much corruption, centered, to begin with, on Kenyatta's own "royal family"—\$180 million in charcoal exported to the Middle East, supposedly illegally, in the past two years, and \$60 million in ivory to the Far East—must have an issue eventually. The slogan of the country, *Harambee* ("Let's all pull together"), has worked out to mean every man for himself, with unemployment in Nairobi, a city of 650,000, at 40 percent, the parks draped with sleeping sad sacks, and private guards posted with club in hand along every downtown street. A white man who barhops, if he doesn't get mugged, encounters a series of frantic con men, needy "students," each with a brother at Columbia University in the U.S.

The other slogan in Kenya is "Africanization," which is to say that a black man should drive around in the Mercedes-Benz, instead of an Asian or *mzungu* (white). Accompanying black capitalism are the "parking boys," ten-year-old walking parking-meters who scrape by one day away from starvation and

sleep in small packs in the bushes—but also some of the virtues of capitalism elsewhere: not a free parliament, but relatively (for Africa) free speech out on the street and a fairly lively press. The best paper is owned by the Aga Khan, in fact. The inner circle of the government cannot be attacked, but it's fun to see the newsmen go to work on, say, the foreign minister from Addis Ababa, on Nairobi's version of *Meet the Press*. Although at least three important dissenting figures have been assassinated in Kenya, and Kenyatta maintains a paramilitary force called by the sinister euphemism General Service Unit ("God Sent Us"), there are far fewer political prisoners in Kenya than in Uganda or Tanzania, and his regular army is only a modest one compared to the Soviet-supplied Somali and Ugandan battalions which sandwich him in. With his white ceremonial fly whisk, the evocative shield and crossed spears on his flag, and his frank shrewdness but vaguely disreputable air, "The Old Man," as he is called, isn't without appeal.

**A**LL THAT NYERERE may have in common with Kenyatta is that Tanzania, too, is a "civilized" African country governed by some of the laws of logic which we Westerners recognize. Nyerere is closest ideologically to his Frelimo neighbors in Mozambique, and closest personally to Kenneth Kaunda, Zambia's president, accepting the idea that Kaunda leans West just as he may lean East. He is a favorite charity of the Swedes, the Chinese Communists, the Dutch, the Canadians, and both West and East Germany, and the \$38 million dollars he got from the U. S. last year was the highest dollar aid figure in all of black Africa.

"Good value," they say at the American Embassy in Dar es Salaam, because the money is spent on what it has been appropriated for, and Nyerere himself is earnest, consistent, and incorruptible, and his nonalignment appears to be genuine. He broke relations with Britain (since reinstated) over the question of Rhodesia's successful secession, sacrificing 10 million pounds' worth of aid to do so, but was the first head of state in Africa to denounce the Arab oil bloc for raising prices to the underdeveloped countries at the same rate as to Europe and the U.S. China built the "Uhuru" railroad to Zambia for him, but only after the World Bank and various other Western institutions had turned him down. He has gotten most of the Chinese out of the country by now, speaks angrily of the Soviets' refusal to assist, as the U. S. did, when a drought in





East Africa two years ago brought famine to Tanzania, and, visiting the University of Dar es Salaam, he will make the point to a political class that Marx wrote about the revolution of the proletariat but that Tanzania, with a population 95 percent rural, effectively has no proletariat.

Nevertheless, the newspapers read like North America's, and the Foreign and Interior Ministries are virulently anticapitalist. (The Treasury, Trade, and Agriculture bureaucracies seem rather pro-West, according to foreigners who deal with them.) Chinese toothpaste, shoes, canned food fill the stores, in payment for that railroad, and although tourists from the decadent West are let into the country for purposes of monetary exchange, if they stray from the regular circuit of game parks and happen to run into a local zealot—a "ten-cell leader," as the lowest-rung TANU party functionaries are called—they may meet with some painful unpleasantnesses.

The Chinese model of rural communes has been useful to Nyerere in fashioning his *Ujamaa* communities through the countryside. There are 7,500 of these, each with 1,000 people or more concertedly tilling the soil. Access is forbidden to foreigners, and with the haste of the last year or so to transfer the bulk of the farming populace have come some accounts of rough stuff, old hamlets burned. Nyerere is also moving his capital from the pretty port of Dar es Salaam, with its half-million souls, to a barren town called Dodoma in the middle of the country, on the same rather arbitrary principle that evoked Brasília in Brazil. He is nation building, just as the Chinese had to, only more so. What is interesting, however, is how his conception of what he is after differs from Chinese Communism. First, he includes religious freedom in his plans—like him, a third of his countrymen are Christians, about a third Moslem, and a third animist—and he doesn't object to missionaries. Second, the Chinese emphasis on constant political confrontation and revolution has been laid aside. Nyerere begins presuming that everybody is "either a peasant or worker," so there is no need to root out and obliterate some nebulous exploiters; independence from Britain, he says, is his care of that. Third, people can leave the country fairly easily if they wish, or return. *Ujamaa* means "familyhood," and the purpose is to build upon the old African kinship customs, with handicapped citizens or the unemployed from the city put back into the care of their hometowns. But the system is intended to be so pervasive that even admission into university is by permission of the local

office of TANU.

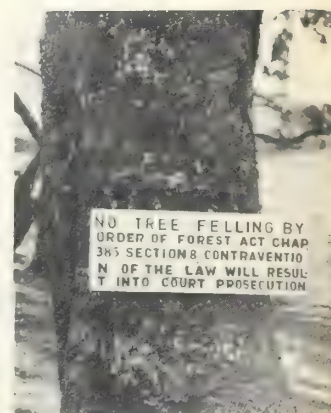
It's said by disillusioned observers that the students are taught by a mixture of revisionist leftists from England and revisionist rightists from Czechoslovakia and not very well. Too often the conspiracy theory of economics is applied to explain Tanzania's poverty, rather than the circumstance that she lets India manufacture rope from her sisal, China textiles from her cotton, and England coffee from her red beans. The minimum wage is above Kenya's, though, and Nyerere has contrived to reduce the spread between the highest- and lowest-paid government workers from 70-to-1 at the time of Independence to 9-to-1.

Nyerere is by all accounts a humane man, as in his treatment of lepers and criminals—there is no death penalty except on the island of Zanzibar, which exercises self-rule—as well as in his concern for wild things. In Kenya wildlife translates simply to tourism and cash and is managed abruptly as such. In Tanzania, although the animals must finally pay for themselves in foreign exchange or find their land taken away from them, much is made of the fact that the great game herds are a centerpiece of the nation's heritage and should be preserved, that the tourism of the future will be regional, as Africans see for themselves what the continent holds.

But because Tanganyika, as mainland Tanzania used to be called, was home to 122 tribes, running counter to this policy of cultural conservation is the government's effort to wipe out tribal affiliations, keeping all mention of tribal loyalties, except deprecating references, out of the paper, for instance, and even discouraging foreign anthropologists who want to come in. *Ujamaa* is to be substituted for the blood and language kinship of the tribes. Nyerere himself came from a backwater group, unlike Kenyatta, whose powerful Kikuyu in Kenya have been his primary base of support all along. In Kenya a man's tribal origins are still spoken of, and Kikuyu is the third language of the country, after Swahili and English. Swahili, that old slaver's tongue—pidgin Bantu, pidgin Arabic—ironically has been the language of *Uhuru* in East Africa, particularly Tanzania, where the use of English is being phased out in school.

**N**YERERE IS A MODERATE man who unfortunately has not institutionalized his own moderation. Nor has he picked vice-presidents of the same stripe. One of the two, Rashidi Kawawa, may have a sadistic streak. He helped run a British detention camp for the Kikuyu during the

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Mau Mau war, and chose to announce and enforce the nationalization of the coffee farms under Mount Kilimanjaro right at the annual banquet of the growers, after the toasts. The other fellow, Sheikh Aboud Jumbe, is from Zanzibar, which is an ominous preparation for public office. There, clove-smuggling is punishable by death, wearing a skirt that shows the knee by four strokes of the cane, failing to raise a given quota of food by six months in jail. No defense counsel is permitted in court, and executions are usually informal. Twelve years ago something like 3,000 Arabs were massacred in the maze of Stone Town, after 800 years of Arab tyranny over the blacks.

A tourist in Zanzibar is treated with such velvety courtesy that I found it bluntly terrifying. The police have the murderous look I remember from Salazar's Portugal, and everywhere one encounters that secret, basilisk, cat-that-swallowed-the-canary smile of people who have profited from a massacre, or else the centuries of slaving before. Stepping off the plane, you are handed a malaria pill, because a few years ago the government stopped an anti-malaria campaign on the ground that only white people get malaria anyway, and white people ought to.

Zanzibar keeps \$60 million stashed in a London bank, while mainland Tanzania limps along on infusions of Swedish kronor. Zanzibar boasts the first color television, the only Ferris wheel in black Africa, because of its near-monopoly on the world's cloves, and belts of Stalinalee architecture, courtesy of the East Germans. The Sultan's white palace is a People's Palace, with a People's Gardens outside, and lines of Swahili women garbed in black wait at the entrance to the V. I. Lenin Hospital to be treated by the Chinese staff. Because islands like the Seychelles are gaining nationhood close by, some Zanzibaris suspect that they may have made a mistake, rushing to link up with Tanganyika in 1964.

Only in Zanzibar did I feel I was in a "dictatorship"—to use the term that was being bandied about by our U. N. diplomat at the time. I roamed through Tanzania by bus, and in the long, bouncing nights, sitting beside Chaggas, Sukumas, Masai (the spear on the baggage rack on top), I found the mainland a freewheeling place. Certainly it is no "dictatorship" as Hitler and Franco and Stalin defined the term, nothing like traveling in Spain ten years ago. It impressed me as a more relaxed, better-knit country than Kenya also, partly because there isn't the brutal contrast of poverty to wealth among the Africans themselves, and partly because there are few-

er Europeans, so that the Tanzanians aren't always looking over their shoulder at a die-hard colonial walrus type smothering a smirk, a tourist subduing his impatience at the difference in how things operate here in Africa from at home.

**I**F THE MODERATION that seems to come naturally to Nyerere—which has been shown again in his treatment of the Asian minority—can only be institutionalized, his country may wind up as the sort of showpiece the Scandinavian Labor parties hope for. The population is expanding painlessly so far (2.7 percent, versus Kenya's 3.5 percent increase a year); and if Tanzania has less prime acreage, more of its land can be marginally farmed. Kenya is a peppier country in some ways, however, not such a solemn test tube. The climate combined with the natural beauty, the animals, the luxury facilities, the general permissiveness, the business "infrastructure" bring in \$75 million in tourism a year, to add to the income from coffee and tea. There's a whiff of old-fashioned freedom in Kenya, which, if the successors to Kenyatta can introduce a spirit of reform and solicitude for more of the people, may make it the happier country to live in some day.

But Dar es Salaam was my favorite city, in a six-week tour. At sunrise, when the dhow-rigged, outrigger *ngalawas* came in, a crowd of fish peddlers on bicycles collected for the auction held on the beach. With all the people hanging around, they stood as thick as if they were embarking upon a pilgrimage—black people with Arabian faces and brimless cloth hats. That funny language, Swahili ("automobile" is *motocaa*, "gonorrhea" *kissono*), rang out from the Indian auctioneer over each pail of fish that was dumped on the sand. Then the long hammerheads, swordfish, kingfish were sold. A little ferryboat chuffed across the mouth of the harbor; the *Asia-Afrika* from Canton slid by. And, wandering about, I was struck by how fascinating life is going to be, how provincial we are, how little we know the Chinese, the Africans, and me. The world is ending for the elephants whose domed skulls I had seen alongside the Galana River in Kenya, but not for human beings.

Of course, America, even where she is unpopular, remains a magnetic image to new nations like these for her many innovations. Right now, it's our music, movies, good food and clothes that seem to be the drawing card—experiments, for the most part, of forty or fifty years ago. But our deeper experiments both old and new, will take their turn.



story by Barry Farrell

# DESERT MANNERS



**H**E CALMED HIMSELF with deep breaths and shallow sayings. Cool it. Take it easy. Lighten up. Without craning his neck, without giving himself away, he found the roadside runners in the error again. There were two of them, all right, big guy in dirty khakis and his dark little pal, about thirty yards from the car.

Lathrop considered squealing out of there. He pictured himself slamming the car into gear, sliding in the gravel, spinning around to face the music. They'd be on him in a flash. He could feel his heart hammer from his knees to his shoulders, but that was something he was used to. It was just that kind of heart.

He wondered if the little one could have been lying, crouched down on the embankment while the big one fished for suckers on the road. Standing there alone he had looked tame and defenseless, a sight that stirred some brotherly impulse in the mind that moved the foot that popped the car. Regretting that impulse would tolerate whatever merit attached to respecting the code of desert travelers, a code Lathrop had savored and endorsed while driving alone on the Interstate: one does not leave another to the mercy of the sun. But this was not the season for dying in the desert—the day was cool and cloudy, the etiquette of survival did not apply.

Lathrop knew he would never have stopped if he'd noticed there were two of them. The size of his convertible would have been reason

enough to go on. Now, sitting in the idling car with the top down, with the runners drawing closer, closing in, he felt absurdly open to attack. He was helpless as a child alongside a standing person; he was tempted to leap out. But then he saw how that would startle and provoke them. They would look at him and wonder: what's he standing up for?

Disadvantaged in his bucket seat, Lathrop gave his windburned face a delicate massage. The authority of fate enveloped him. He could hear his daughter's voice on the long-distance phone, hear himself spooning out consolation. He would take her to the movies. He would take her through the children's arcade of the Circus Circus casino. If only he'd kept his word to her, the car would have been crammed with brand-new camping gear. He wouldn't have been able to stop. Grinning and breathless, the hitchhikers bounded up to the car.

Lathrop's heart pumped harder when he saw them at close range. The big one's chin was slick with drool, and his shirt had been stripped of its buttons. The little one was almost a dwarf, too small to be sane, a Starkweather type, Lathrop thought. His eyes took the measure of driver and car without a hint of greeting. The big one got the back seat loaded, the car commandeered. "Back off!" Lathrop screamed inside his skull. He could see the frightened road tramps go facedown in the gravel, himself slinging their satchels out on the shoulder as he laid rubber up the road. But the big one already had the

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door open and was reaching a bandaged hand across, wrist cocked for a brotherhood shake.

Lathrop shook. He said, "Hi," in a voice that sounded choked and foreign, the result of a mild form of emphysema that, in this circumstance, happened to sound a lot like fear. But it was only that his throat closed up when he went a while without speaking, and he hadn't spoken a word for 200 miles, not since ordering his coffee at Ida's that morning. Of course there was no use explaining that to these two. He felt a pang for Ida's and was stampeded by fresh premonitions. Clearing his throat, he said, "Hi," again, this time much more stoutly.

"How far you goin'?" the little one asked.

In sudden alarm Lathrop noticed a tattoo across the knuckles of the little one's right hand. He had seen exactly this tattoo on the hands of Robert Mitchum in *The Night of the Hunter*. He had heard Truman Capote discuss it on *The Tonight Show*. LOVE on the right hand, HATE on the left. Lathrop was fully on the alert now. He was in a state beyond simple fear. While trying to think of a likely destination discouragingly close by, he stayed poised for a glimpse of the HATE hand.

Then it struck him that his radio was playing far too loud for the desert stillness. Turning it down, searching for a clearer station, he could give himself precious seconds. He made rapid calculations. He was four, maybe five hours east of Hollywood on Interstate Fifteen, still in California, still in the Mojave. But try as he did he could not remember if he'd already passed Zzyzx Road or the Death Valley turnoff at Baker. Beyond Baker, as far as he recalled, there was nothing all the way to Vegas except a last-chance casino just across the line, the place where the Bonnie-and-Clyde death car was displayed. But what did they call it? And why would he be going there? The little one was easing himself into the cramped back seat. Lathrop stopped fiddling with the radio and turned in his seat, as if to offer assistance. The index finger of the HATE hand was marked with a crudely drawn H, but the other three looked bare.

"I'm going to Las Vegas," Lathrop announced, adding an unwise smile.

Time had run out on him. The gun had sounded, ending the game. He felt weakened and imperiled not to have a better idea of his whereabouts. He was always raving about how much he loved the desert, and driving across it in a trance. Passing Baker only meant that the drive was two-thirds done—he had often sailed past that franchised oasis without registering any break in the solitudinous plain, but it disturbed him that he'd failed to notice Zzyzx Road. More bad karma. He knew from his reading that the Manson family had sometimes biv-

ouacked there, that Susan Atkins had named her first-born son, the fruit of Manson's love, Zezozose Zadfrak. Passing Zzyzx Road could induce a vivid reverie, causing him to dwell on the baby's name for many desert miles. Naturally, there were those among his friends who found his fascination with these matters "weird" or amusing, but no one could deny that if he'd only been thinking of Manson, he would never have stopped for Starkweather.

**L**ATHROP SURVEYED the landscape. To his left an expanse of cracked ocher abandonment, lacking a horizon. To his right more Mojave, pissed-upon playa, a place without markings or names. Ahead were the roadside quarries. On an outing many years before he had talked his ex-wife into believing that the quarries were mascara mines. Even now he couldn't help savoring for a moment the gullibility of that woman. But he also sighed in regret for never having learned what they really were there for. He had driven this road a hundred times. How could he account for his ignorance of everything it traversed?

Getting the car in gear, starting up the shoulder, swinging out on the empty freeway—these small acts of competence did much for Lathrop's morale. He was in control of the convertible. If they shot him he would crash.

He noticed some trees of the spindly kind whose limbs seem engaged in mocking gestures. Howdy, sucker. Up yours. Yucca or Joshua Lathrop thought, not knowing which to call them. He was almost certain, though, that these trees grew only at high elevations. Higher than creosote, than crucifixion thorn. If this was so, if these trees were actually yucca, then he was still a good distance from the Nevada line.

"Aw raht!" the little one shouted as the car gathered speed. The hoodlums exchanged smiles.

"My name's Dave," the big one hollered in Lathrop's ear.

"Mine's Steve," said Lathrop, succeeding at last in lying.

The little one said nothing.

Lathrop turned the radio up to assist the wind in impairing conversation. Johnny Cash or someone unashamedly like him. Now he had time to think. Five-foot-two, cowboy boot black hair, LOVE and H. A possible Indian. Six-foot-four, 300 pounds, sandy hair, bandaged hand, filthy clothes, front tooth missing. Dave. Two fine-looking orphan makers. There was something psychopathic in these Mutt-and-Je pairings. My name's Charlie, and this here is Tex. They were partnerships of defects, mutual compromises. Lathrop wondered how these two



d joined up, what Dave's real name was. Dave was running his injured fingers over Lathrop's walnut veneer dashboard. "Cool car!" screamed. "How much it cost?" "I'm afraid I don't remember," Lathrop said, tending to be evasive. But as soon as the words were spoken he saw how they couldn't help but incite a person like Dave. Or Shorty. His fag don't give a shit, they would reason. He must have money up the ass. "I borrowed it from a friend," Lathrop explained, missing no more than a beat. "I forget what he told me he did for it. I'm meeting him tonight in Vegas. I ask." Dave twisted around and grinned back at his partner. Ain't this the life? *I'll ask.* What was that supposed to mean? That he'd meet them tomorrow with the Blue Book figures on the car? Lathrop felt himself sitting in deeper every time he spoke. It was bad enough to tell them he was headed for Vegas and then grin like someone secretly around for Phoenix or Salt Lake. But to come out like an overpriced sales clerk, to say *I'm afraid I don't remember*—that kind of talk could only justify whatever crime was coming. Their minds. They would leave him in the desert bleeding from the ears and drive off glad to have settled an old score with some fifth-grade teacher. Now he was passing the quarries, losing sight

of the only thing he knew. Against the empty basin land the weathered diggings looked more than ever like pits for the mining of shadows. Lathrop thought of his wife—his ex-wife now, thank God. A cocktail waitress in Vegas. More or less a whore. He was ashamed to have his daughter growing up in that rotten atmosphere. Little girl. What kind of place was Vegas for a little girl? He was sorry to have been the one who introduced her to the Circus Circus. He wished again that he'd at least bought the camping gear to show her his good intentions. His thoughts fluttered around to a counting of familiar things. Ida's, the mascara mines, *The Tonight Show*, Baker. A hundred years ago Baker was on the line of march for the twenty-mule teams bringing borax out of Death Valley. Lathrop embraced his possession of this knowledge, remembered from a radio serial heard thirty-five years before. Steering down the die-straight road, he pictured himself as a child.

"How'd you like a set of wheels like this, Dave?" the runt shouted past Lathrop's ear. Dave made a primitive circle of forefinger and thumb. Then both of them cracked up laughing. "Raht own!" Dave yelled, affecting a comic black accent. "Aw raht!" came the answer from the rear. Followed by more laughter.

So now they were passing signals in their private code. They were into their prison-yard

**"This was not the season for dying in the desert—the day was cool and cloudy, the etiquette of survival did not apply."**





soul-brother act. It was common knowledge that white criminals often assumed black accents on the verge of a violent crime, as if pretended blackness gave them the rights of piracy. *We hed ta waste the muthah. Hed ta hit him upside a head.* After they dumped him they would employ the same fake accent to make fun of the way he died.

"Hey, no shit, man, this really is a sharp car, man." Dave shouted. He was all slobber and sincerity now, desert-eyed, stupid. Fat Boy would have to do better than that to pull Lathrop off his guard.

"Yeah, we's laughin' at somethin' else, man," the little one said, cupping the LOVE hand close to Lathrop's ear. "We been out on the road so long we's half nuts anyhow."

"All last night and all this morning, too," Dave yelled into the wind and music. "Lucky we had us some oranges, man, 'cause we spent all our money in Berdoo."

"We's real happy when we seen you stoppin', man," the little one said with a cloying inflection that made Lathrop fear for the back of his neck. "Raht own!" Dave hollered. And again they started to laugh.

**L**ATHROP SENSED that the time had come to end this cat-and-mouse game. It was time to take the initiative, to give them what they wanted while he could. "Look, you guys, just take the car," he practiced saying. "Let me pull over here and get out. It's my friend's car anyhow. He don't give a shit." But that wouldn't be good enough. They would want his money too. He would give it to them, gladly. He pictured himself standing alongside the car, handing the children his money. Of course they would never believe that \$40 was all he was taking to Vegas. It wouldn't matter that the money was meant for his daughter. They would rip his wallet open, find out that his name wasn't Steve. They would tear through his papers and clothes in anger and disappointment. His panic would drive them on. And when they finally killed him they'd have no idea at all of what they were taking from this earth.

A resurgent love of the desert rose up in him, restoring his place in the emptiness. He could understand and forgive his inattention to its details in light of the value he placed on its vastness and desolation. He didn't have to know what grew and lived there to recognize its perfection as a place to die.

Sentimental clutter swam across his eyes, causing him to doubt the overpass when he saw it shimmering far down the road. He had to bat his eyes against memories as well as mirages. His inexhaustible heart began to thrash in antic-

ipation, and when he drew close enough to see that it was a real overpass leading to a real food-and-gas plaza, he had to struggle to contain a whimper of relief. Gracefully, imperceptibly, the happy Catholic swung into the right-hand lane. In the mirror he could see the little one chewing his nails, brow furrowed in concentration. Dave appeared to be getting drowsy.

"How about some coffee?" Lathrop asked with an emphysematous warble as he shot into the exit. The deft maneuver gave no one a choice in the matter—he was steering hard to get in sight of other humans before the killers could gather their wits. He saw them exchange a look, establish a new conspiracy. But by then he was gliding up to the ramparts of the coffee shop. From its gold-and-orange facade, he knew it to be one of the Snooky's chain. He had passed it a hundred times without stopping.

Dave and Shorty scrambled out after him. Dave yawned, stretched, and said something nice about the car. They straggled in, looking natural, and approached a chest-high counter where a couple of grandmothers stood. Effusive and polite, Lathrop ordered coffee and doughnuts for the three of them.

"What kind of work you do?" Shorty asked as soon as they were settled. His chin was close to the table for slurping. Lathrop observed that the three bare fingers of the HATE hand were clouded over with scars.

"I'm a lawyer for the public defender's office," he said. He had rehearsed the answer many miles down the road, and it came off without a hitch. "I'm going to Vegas for a Nevada sheriffs' convention. I'm giving a talk on your rights when you get arrested. Later on tonight."

The little one seemed to shrink still smaller at this news, as if measuring the fury of the sheriffs if their after-dinner speaker didn't show. But Dave couldn't hide his dumb-cluck's luck at meeting an off-duty people's lawyer. "No shit!" he said. "Wish a fuck I met you six months ago!" Soon he was babbling freely about how the cops had deprived him of his rights in Yub City, how they'd set the bail too high for his father to pay—"for fuckin' larceny, man"—how he'd been in jail with Juan Corona, how Corona was a far-out dude.

Lathrop enjoyed fresh infusions of confidence as Dave rattled on. Behind a mask of total calm he rejoiced at the swiftness of his mind. The difference between him and the kind of people who get themselves murdered, he reflected, was that he understood the importance of brushing up against the beast now and then. That was why he'd picked these clowns up in the first place. He could twist their thoughts and fear around until there was no way they could harm him.



When Dave started quizzing him about his work, Lathrop displayed a professional's bored amusement with the details of his trade while never losing sight of his profound concern for the rights of down-and-outers. Like you guys. He amazed himself at how much he seemed to know about the public defender's office.

But then the little one seemed to bristle. He stared hard at Dave and worked his rodent jaw. "Dave, man, that whole trip's bullshit, man," he said from behind his screen of fingers. "When the fuck you gonna figure it out? You're on the road without a nickel in your pocket and the lawyer goes by in his convertible. I mean it's nothin' against you, mister, but Jesus! It's the same goddam deal, ain't it? Wise as fuckin' up!"

Lathrop was quick to rally. "I can see what you're trying to say..." he began. But his admissions that the system was in many ways unjust only reminded Dave of whose side he was on. On the two of them were exchanging outlaw encouragements. Nobody gonna give you dick, fuck! If you want it, git down and git it! Raht fuckin'! There was further praise of Corona, Manana, and a number of lesser killers in the Santa Cruz area whom Dave particularly admired. Lathrop listened for every nuance in this conversation, trying to decide between two interpretations: either they trusted him enough to confide

their worst criminal ambitions, or else they were stupid enough to kill him, after all. If he tried to make a break now the showdown would come in the parking lot. He could picture the grandmothers clucking over his corpse. There was only one way to test the killers' intentions without leaving the sanctuary of Snooky's.

Lathrop excused himself and strolled across the room, passing through the franchised highway gift shop. Boulder Dam and Death Valley decals, comb-and-dolly sets, something for his daughter. But no. He remembered the sheriffs' convention and moved on. Turning to enter the men's room, he glanced back at the table. Dave was coming through the gift shop after him.

Lathrop locked himself inside the only stall. The door left his feet and ankles vulnerable. Dave was tall enough to look in over the top. Dave came in through the outer door and began making hydraulic noises. Lathrop eased a sheet of paper off the toilet roll. His heart was a mighty machine. Never mind. "I am with 2 hitchhikers," he wrote, tearing the fragile paper with his pen and staining his pants at the knee. "I think they mean to harm me. Please call State Patrol. I am in canary yellow convert Calif lic AQR 953. Headed for Vegas. Thanks." He scratched out the word "canary," folded the message into a small square, and fitted it under his watch strap. Dave still lingered outside the

**"Against the empty basin the weathered diggings looked more than ever like pits for the mining of shadows."**





stall. He had turned the water on and was letting it run. Lathrop steadied his nerves. Take it easy. Lighten up. He spun the roll of paper as loud as it would go, flushed the toilet, stood, and did a hitching-the-pants-up shuffle. Then he opened the door and stepped out. Dave was pretending to wash his damaged fingers.

Lathrop came back through the gift shop with Dave at his heels. Through transparent amber window shades he saw the little one out in the parking lot, examining the convertible. He hurried over to the table, snatched up the check, then moved back across to the cash register, choosing a path that cut Dave off at the revolving postcard trees. A teen-aged boy sat behind the counter with a textbook in his lap. He barely looked up as Lathrop approached, digging under his watch strap. Lathrop felt at once that he could place absolute trust in this intelligent student. He slipped the message between the check and a \$5 bill and casually handed it over.

Dave was belly-up against the counter now, apparently shoplifting an after-dinner mint. But from the vacant aura he projected Lathrop could tell that he hadn't seen a thing. The cashier's eyes seemed to flash a silent alarm when his fingers touched the emergency sandwich. "Thank you, sir," he told Lathrop as he handed him his change. The very nonchalance of his manner convinced Lathrop that the call was as good as in.

**L**ATHROP DROVE FAST to give the highway patrol a pretext for pulling him over. He drove seventy, then seventy-five. He drove long enough and fast enough to begin worrying about crossing the Nevada line before the police could get organized. Tumbleweeds skimmed past at seventy. Creosote. Crucifixion thorn. Lathrop pictured himself camping in the desert with his daughter, building a fire inside a small circle of stones. Flames danced in reflection on a brand-new nylon tent.

Then, in the mirror, Lathrop caught sight of a black-and-white car a half-mile behind him. The next time he looked there were two. His heart went into an impetuous fandango; that didn't prove a thing. He checked again in the mirror. The police were keeping their distance. He didn't understand why they were hanging back, why there had to be two of them. He didn't dare to think how long it would be before the little one saw them also.

Starkweather had rearranged his perch in the back so that Lathrop couldn't watch him in the mirror. Dave had shifted around in his seat and was back to fingering the dashboard, seeing how everything worked. What would happen

when the police made their move? What could he do with Starkweather's automatic in the back of his neck and Dave's gorilla foot jammed over his on the gas pedal? Humiliation spilled over him. He realized with deathly clarity that calling the police had been a colossal blunder, a self-destructive move no different from picking up the killers in the first place. On his own, he might have been able to talk his way out of trouble, but with the police involved the danger was much greater. A heavy sigh escaped him as he faced the inevitable shoot-out. He pictured his pitying friends. Poor Lathrop—he wrote his suicide note on toilet paper. Down the road, a mile distant, Lathrop saw another highway patrol car cut across the grass divider. He was doing almost eighty when he shot past the waiting cruiser.

Chemicals entered his bloodstream, making him ready to receive the bullets. His heart hurt. He sagged in his seat. His car slowed. All three cruisers came abreast of him.

"Hey, what the fuck!" the little one shouted just before the bullhorn spoke.

*"Stop your vehicle. Leave the roadway. Stop your vehicle at once."*

The three cars had him pinned. They were edging him toward the shoulder. A shotgun protruded from the rear window of the car closest to him. Lathrop had to wrestle the wheel for control.

*"Do not move. Remain in sight. Keep your hands in sight. Do not attempt to leave the vehicle."*

Police cars skidded up at all angles. Doors flew open. Red and blue lights snapped around in the afternoon sun. Guns and helmets emerged.

*"First you, next to the driver. Out of the car. Hands in the air. Move! Down on your stomach. Hands behind the head. Now you, in the back . . ."*

A sergeant approached the convertible, holding his heavy pistol in both hands. Lathrop was heaving at the power he had summoned. The road tramps were facedown in the gravel. Some one was slinging their satchels out on the shoulder.

"Do you want these men arrested, sir?" the sergeant said, lowering his pistol.

"No, no," said Lathrop, struggling to produce an urgent whisper. "Don't call me 'sir.' Treat me like them. Take me back to your car and I'll explain it."

"Okay, on your feet," the sergeant said, failing to convince. Lathrop hoped that Dave and Shorty couldn't hear. He wished the sergeant would raise his pistol to make it look more real. He rose from the car with his hands up and walked to the farthest cruiser. Giddiness overcame him. His mind spun around to Manson



desert busts. He wondered what the passing motorists would make of him, what they would think of this remarkable tableau.

Back in the police car he explained about the LOVE and HATE tattoos, the way they'd talked about black accents and overpraised his car, about Truman Capote and Juan Corona. The sergeant seemed to understand.

"Where'd you pick them up, sir?" he asked. Lathrop didn't want to risk describing the Escalante mines without knowing what they were there for.

"Back around Zzyzx Road," he said. Through the windshield he could see two patrolmen poking through the hitchhikers' belongings while a third stood over them with a shotgun. Lathrop knew no weapons would be found.

The police relaxed their guard after the search was completed. A call was put through to check on everyone's record. Dave and Shorty looked worried. They stood at the edge of the road, tossing rocks at bottles and cans. Lathrop glided up and joined them in the prison-yard pastime.

"What's going down, man?" Shorty asked in a confidential tone. They didn't suspect him! Quite the contrary, the bust had been a kind of initiation that made them temporary equals. In their minds, Lathrop felt a surge of pleasure at being there with them.

"I don't know, man," he said.

"Is the car okay?"

"Oh, sure. Sure. I think somebody back at the café called. They must have overheard us talking or something like that."

"Shee! We figured it had to be the car for that kind of bust like that. We thought you was probably bullshittin' about your friend. Who owns anybody a car like that?" Shorty sailed a kick into the culvert and broke another bottle, his second in a row. Dave was searching for bigger and bigger rocks, drooling at the effort.

"Which of you guys is Jimmy Dale Evans?" the sergeant asked, approaching them. He had Dave and Shorty's wallets fastened to his clipboard.

"Over here," the little one said.

"Looks like you been missing some meetings with your parole officer, little Jim. Last three in row."

"I been lookin' for work, man," Jimmy Dale said with a ferocity Lathrop envied. It must be tough to find a job with that tattoo, he thought. He was stricken with remorse for having caused the poor bastard this new brush with the law. He stared at the sergeant for calling him "little Jim."

"I'm not taking you into custody," the sergeant said, "but I'm telling you now that your parole officer will be advised that we've stopped

you. If he wants to do something about it, that's his business. Understood?" He handed Jimmy Dale his wallet. Jimmy took it with the HATE hand.

Dave grinned moronically as the sergeant turned his way. "Looks like you better watch what kind of company you're keeping, David. David Clyde Brown? That it?" Dave nodded and grinned. Lathrop was stung to discover that Dave was his real name. He wished the sergeant had his wallet, too, had some rough words, something to erase the unrecoverable distance between him and the two friends.

"You don't have to stay any longer, sir," the sergeant said. "We'll keep these jokers here while you get started."

"Oh, no, man," Lathrop said. The words hung in the air as if spoken in enemy dialect. "I don't mind giving them a ride the rest of the way. They're headed for Vegas, same as me."

"Suit yourself," the sergeant said.

Lathrop helped Dave and Jimmy get their satchels loaded. Without a suspicion of weapons inside, they felt pathetically light. Lathrop reminded himself that Dave and Jimmy were criminal types, but now that the police had everyone's name he knew he was in no danger. There was no way they could touch him now. The ride to Vegas was the least he owed them for having brought on this roadside humiliation. By the time the car was loaded, the last of the cruisers was gone.

Once they were rolling again, Lathrop explained how one of the grandmothers must have heard them talking about Manson and Corona. "I guess she must have thought you guys were going to do me in," he added with an indulgent chuckle.

"Stupid bitch!" Dave hollered. "We wouldn't of let you stop at the fuckin' café or go back to the men's room like that if we's plannin' anything, would we, Jimmy?"

Little Jim did not say.

A few minutes later they were over the state line, passing the Bonnie-and-Clyde death car. "Raht own!" Dave was yelling. "Ah raht!" said the voice from the rear. Lathrop marveled at the simplemindedness of his passengers. How could they possibly plan their crimes? He decided not to bother telling his ex-wife about the afternoon's events. She would never believe how well his intuition had served him. He'd explain his late arrival some other way, or else say nothing at all. It would still be warm enough to take his daughter riding with the top down. They'd find a movie. He'd buy popcorn, Cokes, whatever else she wanted. He would make her glad to see him. Pleasant pictures absorbed him the rest of the way to Vegas. When he passed the Circus Circus, Jimmy and Dave got out.

**"The difference between him and the kind of people who get themselves murdered, he reflected, was that he understood the importance of brushing up against the beast now and then."**



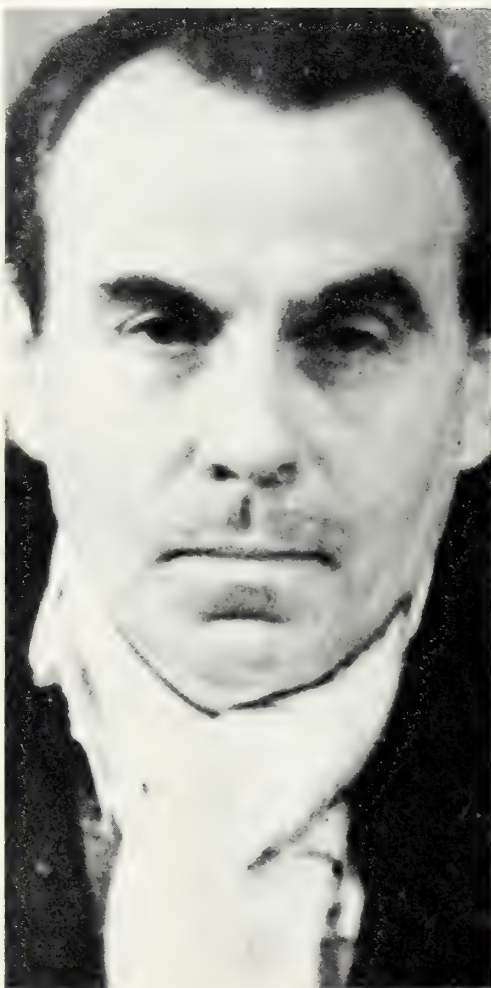
# IN SUPPORT OF CELINE

by Anthony Burgess

*Céline*, by Patrick McCarthy. Viking, \$10.

**C**ÉLINE'S NOVEL *Voyage au bout de la nuit* appeared in Paris in 1933. The only English version I know—*Journey to the End of Night*, done by John H. P. Marks—came out in London in 1966. I wrote a very laudatory review and was attacked in a book on the Moors Murders by Lady Snow, who seemed to allege that writers like Céline contributed to the murderous decadence of our age. That Céline is, to many, a dangerous writer seems confirmed by the paucity of translations of his work and the delay in appearance of such translations as exist.

Even in France he is touched with gloves or fire tongs. He died on the same day as Hemingway but got far less space in the French newspapers. Of course, he had all the wrong ideas about life. It was bad enough for him to prefer the dirty and diseased to the healthy bourgeoisie, finding, like Beckett but without Beckett's willingness to cleanse through melody, the truth about life in *la merde universelle*. However, it was totally unforgivable for him to be praised by the Nazi *Stürmer* and then, with a kite tail of anti-Semitic pamphlets attached, fly off to Hitler's Germany in 1944. If Ezra Pound was wrong-headed, Céline was a monster. That at least two of his books, though long ignored by the academic literary histories, are among the most important that modern France has produced is now being grudgingly admitted, or readmitted, but Céline has not yet



Keystone

been totally forgiven for his treachery. Time, that pardons Paul Claudel, has still some way to run before the dead patriots and defectors alike can, in Eliot's words, be folded into a single party and accept the constitution of silence.

Patrick McCarthy's critical biography is a brave work and, more, a necessary one. Louis-Ferdinand Desbouches, to give him his true name ("Céline" was his grandmother's), is revealed as a man of a complexity not easily unraveled, heroic soldier

in the first war, pacifist after, saintly doctor who finds reality in disease and man's lot totally tragic, voice of shopkeepers as well as of whores and pimps, adorer of the human body worshiper of women, physically strong but far gone into melancholy, utterer of *mots* like "Look closely at the cemetery. It contains everything you can say or feel."

The *Voyage*, with its relentless pessimism, must not be taken as autobiography, but it is built out of the author's own experiences—war, French colonialism, the industrial hell of Detroit, the *cauchemar* of New York, journeys which all end in self-destruction. Yet the adventures of the hero Bardamu are shorn of the "motivation" which the films of the Thirties used to persuade us was attached to every human act. Things happen aleatorically; life is meaningless. Death is certain and we try to wait around for it, being pushed minimally by events in the meantime; but death, unlike life, bestows the brief gift of choice: one can at least elect, if one is lucky, how to die. Man is not an animal; he is capable of knowledge even wider than that of the approach of his own end, but this knowledge is of no value, since it cannot lead to the changing of the human condition. Here, as McCarthy points out, is the difference between Céline and Sartre: "For Sartre, as for Marxists, knowledge involves change. The realisation of one's place in the universe brings with it the commitment to revolt. For Bardamu it was 'only inside me that things were happening.'"

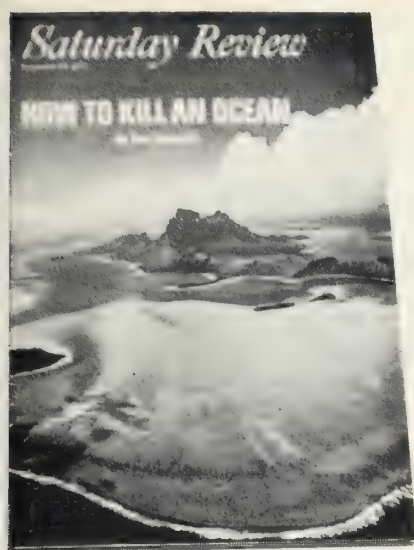
Solipsism, perhaps, is the worst



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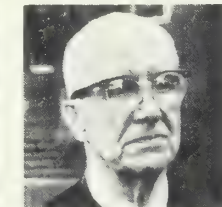
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### BOOKS

*Mort à crédit* (Paris, 1936; translated by Marks as *Death on the Installment Plan*, London, 1968) was attacked by the orthodox Marxists—led, imposingly, by Ivan Anissimov in the U.S.S.R.—because it demonstrated the miseries of capitalist society without displaying their cause or presenting, even with the obliquity appropriate to a work of literature, a program for their destruction. The wretchedness of the Paris life Céline knew as a young man, and from which he escaped into the cavalry, is depicted with a naturalistic technique that goes beyond Zola (excretion, stink, the working-class pigsty), but it lacks Zola's insights, his balance, above all his underlying philosophy. There is nothing outside the phenomena the narrator observes, either in the drive of the Schopenhauerian *Wille* or in the engines of history. Naturalism should, after all, be a metaphysic as well as a technique, but Céline can only give us the flux without its springs, the entropy without the thermodynamic law.

This is as much as to say that Céline reads to us like a man of faith more than an existentialist or Marxist. Faith without faith, indeed, but there is a smell of Newman's "terrible aboriginal calamity" in all the meticulously detailed images of decay. This is what human life is like, and nothing can be done about it: there is no political nostrum, no redemptive avatar. And yet the verbal flow, the richness of the vocabulary with its neologisms and argot, suggests an embracing of the condition with a kind of relish. We think of Joyce but even more of Rabelais. Here is the old paradox of art. The denial of human joy is made through language which is itself a joy. And there is, of course, the Célinian humor, blacker and more bitter than Beckett's.

There is also the Célinian dynamic, a world away from the *chosisme* of the antinovels, who fill their world with solid bodies and deny solidity to the human observer. Again, we miss the old-fashioned cinematic motivation: things are live and swift moving, but without cause. "All the dishes are in smithereens, spinning, crashing, hurtling through the air." English sailors "lurch and frolic along. Already tight and ever so happy. They skip and romp and guffaw . . . They can't make any headway as their jigs collide around a lamp-post."



ey get entangled." But the dance  
always one of disintegration; there  
no true solid bodies to the solip-  
sistic, only a more or less solid observer.

**C**ÉLINE'S LITERARY gifts were  
evidently not cognate with  
an ability to think coher-  
ently. This unpolitical man,  
taking literature out of the ma-  
terials of the social reformer, athe-  
ist with a kind of religious sensibil-  
ity, was given to the irrational choos-  
ing of scapegoats for his own wrongs  
and, by an inevitable transition, the  
sins of the persecuted world he  
knew best. He didn't want reform,  
he wanted merely to blame. As Mc-  
Carthy says, he wanted to feel per-  
secuted, and, as an author, his chief  
persecutor had to be his publisher  
Gallimard. He wished to be cheated,  
and so there had to be cheaters, even  
imaginary ones. Like any small Paris  
bookkeeper of the Dreyfus era, he  
was bound sooner or later to pick on  
the Jews. We can see the progress of  
anti-Semitism in 1934, when he  
visited Los Angeles. Beginning with  
his friend Mahé's paraphrase "No!  
we are not anti-Semitic. . . . But un-  
like the rest of the goys we can dis-  
tinguish a Jew from a goy. So we are  
perfectly well aware of the great  
wish international solidarity" we  
move on to "The Hollywood  
girls . . . know what a pretty girl is"  
Céline had an almost manic admira-  
tion for American female beauty)  
and "Ah! Goldwyn Mayer! I would  
have given ten years of my life to sit  
one moment in their armchairs.  
Those goddesses at my mercy."  
Anti-Semitism is not yet serious,  
but it soon will be.

Add to this Céline's fascination  
with low life, his tendency to see the  
dark side of a city like London  
New York or Berlin and be in-  
ferent to its beauty or creative vi-  
tality, his pleasure in being appalled,  
his tendency to impose his solipsistic  
vision on the outside world, and it  
becomes possible for him to be-  
lieve that fascism is better than de-  
mocracy. In the late Thirties he be-  
gan to write pamphlets. War was  
coming, civilization was going to be  
destroyed. Blame the Jews, said Cé-  
line. One has to see his *Bagatelles*—not  
included in the *Oeuvres complètes*  
—because of the embarrassment of the



## Her father gave her away when she was three years old.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

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publisher Gallimard—as being set very firmly in a French polemical tradition compounded of Gallic hot air and Gallic logic. You take a scapegoat premise for the wrongs of France—the British, the Americans, the Freemasons, the capitalists—and you work it to death. The Jews were just one of several available organized villainies, and Céline, who thought, remembering his mother's shopkeeping days, he knew what the Jews were like, went to work on them in a spirit closer to fantasy than to informed reason. He sings a note uncommon in the other pamphleteers of his day: the Jew is uncreative and an enemy of beauty. It is an attitude which only a word-spinning fantasist of Céline's talent could hope to make plausible. Plausibility is, however, conspicuously lacking. Life could be a dance, says Céline, society could be a ballet if it were not for the Jews. This, with so much of Richard Wagner's anti-Semitism (who could tolerate *Parsifal* if he took note of its philosophy?), can be laughed off, like Béraud's pamphlet recommending that the British be reduced to slavery. But unfortunately Céline went over to the Germans in 1944.

Forgiveness and rehabilitation are perhaps coming faster to this remarkable writer than his shade has any right to expect. But the work of his that may be expected to last as a genuine, if highly subjective and idiosyncratic, vision of life is not tainted by overt pro-Nazism, though Patrick McCarthy insists that the *oeuvre* be taken as a whole. Those who read Céline in English are unlikely ever to get the whole *oeuvre*; in the meantime it is in order to regard the *Voyage* and *Mort à crédit* as representative of his genius. He remains a dangerous writer, as does any writer who delves into evil—like the Marquis de Sade and, for that matter, William Shakespeare. He lacks Sade's logic and Shakespeare's compassion, but he has his own quality, not easily imitated. McCarthy's book is to be recommended highly on both its biographical and critical sides, reminding us as it does that important writers must not be ignored merely because they make us feel uncomfortable. Literature, as they say, has many mansions. □

*Anthony Burgess, the British novelist, is at present working on a long historical novel called Christ the Tiger.*

## HAIL TO THE CHIEFS

by Richard Condon

**The Canfield Decision**, by Spiro T. Agnew. Playboy, \$8.95.

**The Company**, by John Ehrlichman. Simon and Schuster, \$8.95.

**I**T IS THE RULE, not the exception, that otherwise unemployable public figures inevitably take to writing for publication. "Peaches" Browning was an example. So was Hitler. Heaven knows how many publishers tried to get a book out of Sonny Wisecarver. The Boston Strangler and Willie Sutton shook the tree. Each of the books these people wrote told us as much as he understood about his past and how it all happened to turn out that way. Now two more recently retired are out there on their book jackets looking as learned, prescient, probing, and humane as real book authors just naturally look. They got there the hard way. Each had to associate with Richard Nixon to get the material for his novel. One took on the job of Vice-President of the United States, temporarily; the other did heavier work. Each man seems to have had contrasting motives for book writing; each book reflects a different Washington. It is a capital for crooks and for middle-aged sex; separately sinister and equally brutalized, each Washington is seen from a view of special, informed conditioning. When the Agnew novel ends, the American Vice-President in the book is about to be charged with murder while in office. The Ehrlichman novel also features murder most foul among our national leaders, but it offers more direct satisfaction to most of the people who will want to read these books.

The *raison d'être* for both novels is not that they might be assessable

as literature but that their authors were part of the inner camarilla of a notorious American criminal. Therefore, the immediate assumption is that each man's book must contain direct, personally experienced information, as fiction, which will illuminate Richard Nixon's motives for humiliating the Presidency. They had both rushed the can for The Great Tainter, the shabbiest and most wantonly opportunistic American President. They had been backroom boys. They could tell us how such a disastrous presence had happened—warn us, as it were, in case it ever seemed to be happening again.

As illogical as it would be to find superlative novelistic talent here, that is precisely how logical it is for citizens, denied their right to the truth by an act of the succeeding President who repaid a job loan with a pardon, to feel that now the hour of truth has arrived.

**T**HE BOOKS HAVE stylistic similarities. In both almost all characters "sound" the same. The exception in Mr. Agnew's book is Porter Canfield, the Vice-President, a man almost added by the conviction that the State of Israel actually runs the Congress and the communications industry. Mr. Ehrlichman's book the outstanding exceptions are President Richard Monckton and his NSA head, Professor Dr. Carl Tessler. Both authors sweep out the sex scenes as if writing with their young children reading over their shoulders. In Mr. Agnew's book no government official, regardless of level, attempts to do anything except run for reelection. Both books recall strongly the St. Louis Expo-



; a huge structure. However, the position in both books miniaturizes . Both books have characters named Atherton. Each is a first-class the-job manual for chaps who at to be either a Vice-President or presidential lobbyglow. The labyrinthine paths of government procedure, from transportation, to staff, agency relationships, to security, food and drink are all in both. resemblances stop there. The authors split at a wide fork in the road. Mr. Ehrlichman's novel expresses what it was like to live with hard Nixon.

*The Canfield Decision*, by Spiro T. Agnew, is set in 1983. Porter Canfield, Vice-President of the United States, has great private wealth and an indifferent wife. Her neglect prompts the Vice-President into bed with the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (a woman). The second-term President, a vague and stat-suggestion named Walter Hurley, wholly unrelated by feature, speech, gesture, or predilection to hard Nixon, intentionally and unintentionally. Rather than make this character seem like Nixon, Mr. Agnew draws him like Charles Dawes. Porter Canfield uses an "explosion" Middle East situation as his alibi to the nomination for the presidency. He conspires with Halevy, leader of a New York organization called INAF (Israel Now And Forever). Halevy is set up by an Iranian underground group to commit political murder in the United States. As a co-conspirator, Canfield is jailed by President Hurley "for having created a fiction that the Soviet Union was encouraging Arab terrorists to kill Zionist sympathizers and force the American government to deliver ICBMs to Israel." The President turns Canfield over to the Department of Justice to be charged with conspiracy and murder. The novel seems to be saying that an American President saved his people from the world from his Vice-President. What kind of a plea would that be if this were the sort of revelatory novel, by a real Vice-President, we expected it to be?

*The Canfield Decision* is interesting, frequently tense and well constructed. But the novel is a cheat because its author's past position represents it to be something which it is not. Perhaps that's the reader's

fault, but I don't think so. Let's blame the publisher's press agent. *Somebody* gave us the wrong idea.

**M**R. EHRLICHMAN knew what he was intended to deliver. He had been left ruined by Richard Nixon, who had set him up to take the fall (just as Mr. Agnew seems to have been set up to take one) while making his own escape forever with a barrel of booze on Air Force One. It is clear that Mr. Ehrlichman hungers to have everyone who can read English see Richard Nixon as Ehrlichman saw him: as a paranoiac, drunken, and sinister slob. Beside *The Company*, *The Canfield Decision* cannot be said to exist, because of the rules of the game.

In *The Company*, the reader will have no difficulty determining an accurate who is who from the representations of the characters. It is a novel about a chief of operations of the CIA named William Martin (read Richard Helms) who had been commanded to pass along a murder order from his President, Billy Curry (read John F. Kennedy). When Esker Scott Anderson (read Lyndon Baines Johnson) succeeds Curry, he appoints Martin to become director of the Central Intelligence Agency because he holds the power over Martin. Anderson retires from re-nomination because he is dying. In the subsequent election, Richard Monckton is elected to the Presidency.

Monckton is characterized by his hatred of everyone and everything, including himself. He is a loony who sits alone in the dark to plot against his enemies. ("Sleeping pills always made him feel dull the next day . . . so he had to have a drink or two to get things started. Unfortunately, he became intoxicated quickly, leading him to become morose, bitter, and belligerent. If he was tired it only took one or two drinks to turn Monckton the intellectual statesman into Monckton the offensive slob.") Monckton's vindictiveness and pettiness are epic. He would send a man into exile for the smallest slight, done years before. He pores over banquet menus, scolding waitresses and worrying cooks. His speech and its brutality recall some Liverpool longshoreman in a filthy story. His

mind and its workings suggest a filthy story.

Monckton fondles the memory of the late Billy Curry with aberrant hatred. He is determined to wipe out anything and anyone remotely connected to his dead predecessor. Martin, a Curry man, knows his job is threatened and his exposure imminent. Using secret CIA information, he surrounds Prof./Dr. Carl Tessler (read Henry Kissinger), the egomaniac's irascible egomaniac. Martin keeps his job. Monckton chafes. Monckton's psychoses lead him to wiretapping and plotting in the Oval Office with a burglar called Lars Haglund (read E. Howard Hunt) hired by T. T. Tallford (read Charles Colson).

Monckton edges closer and closer to Martin's secret. Martin (with the CIA) entraps Monckton and his burglars, shows the President photographic evidence, and agrees to "silence" in exchange for the right to name his own successor (the murderer he has been protecting) and to be named himself Ambassador to Jamaica (read Iran). All evidence proving Monckton's complicity in and cover-up of the burglaries is left in the hands of the new CIA director.

Thus the novel details why Watergate happened, from a point of authority, and provides the motivation. In a fascinating and direct way *The Company* says that both of Nixon's predecessors were responsible for establishing Watergate guilt while Nixon's hatred for all people provided the generating reasons.

Let us hope that *The Company* wins readership and success to the point where it persuades Spiro T. Agnew and others maimed to write the books expected of them in the first place. If one's family were destroyed and the murderer were instantly pardoned without a trial under the most corruptly suspicious conditions, one might feel one had cause to complain. The validity and continuity of the supreme leadership of our country was attacked and vilely humiliated. Evidence from eyewitnesses, whether given as fact or as fiction, must continue to be accumulated until the voice of reason demands to know why that contemptible pardon is not reversed. □

*Richard Condon's most recent novel is The Whisper of the Axe.*





## IN FAVOR OF PENGUINS

by Gerald Durrell

**Penguins: Past and Present, Here and There**, by George Gaylord Simpson. Yale University Press, \$10.

**O**F ALL THE BIRDS, penguins are probably the most popular, the most instantly recognizable by even the most unornithological of humans, and the most comical. Small wonder, then, that the number of books written about them is legion, and, if piled one on top of the other, would probably form a pyramid five feet, seven inches high, or the height of the largest known fossil penguin, *Anthropornis nordenskjoeldi*. In the face of this plethora of penguin lore, it is difficult to view with anything but a jaundiced eye the arrival of yet another piece of penguin prose on the scene. Fortunately, Dr. Simpson's book is (if I may use the phrase in connection with such a stoically flightless creature as the penguin) a bird of another feather.

I once knew a man who risked the breakup of what had been a blissfully happy marriage of some thirty summers because he suddenly became addicted to penguins and acquired a blackfooted one or, to give it its pseudonym, a jackass penguin. This would not have been so bad if he had been a member of the almost extinct English aristocracy with a lake or two at his disposal and the odd Rembrandt he could sell in order to procure fish; but he was a reasonably unsuccessful greengrocer living in an apartment in Surbiton (that hotbed of English conformity), a place where the inhabitants, in their

dark suits, bowler hats, and neatly furled umbrellas, resembled a rookery of penguins so closely that, naturally, they viewed askance the presence of the real thing in their midst. My friend's wife was of much the same opinion. She viewed with despondency the feathers in the bath, together with the fish scales and, occasionally, a sardine head adhering to the soap. Both she and the neighbors objected to the bird's habit of suddenly throwing back its head and braying like a demented donkey. When I asked my friend why he liked this smelly, noisy, vicious bird, he said he found its appealing stupidity irresistible. He said, rather defensively, that some men felt this about some types of women, and he felt it about penguins. I am happy to report that the marriage was saved when my friend, after persuasion from me and threats from his wife, sent Victoria Regina (which is what he had christened the bird) to join others of its species at the London zoo. I venture this anecdote in order to show how easy it is to become a penguinophile, for after reading Mr. Simpson's excellent book, this is what you may well become. Mr. Simpson writes with wit, affection, and scholarship about his subject, and he has produced one of the best books on the penguin that I have read.

**P**ENGUINS ARE one of the most astonishingly adapted of all birds; a superficial glance at one would show this to even the unzoological eye. The

torpedo shape for cleaving the water, the sleek, almost hairlike, feathering, the wings like paddles with which it "flies" through the water, the beak adapted as well as any hawk's as a predatory weapon—all these are obvious. But penguins have other hidden talents, which Mr. Simpson enumerates. Did it ever occur to you that these birds may have more trouble keeping cool than hot? To humans reared on cartoons of penguins standing on chilly ice floes, the idea seems preposterous; yet the author (quoting another penguin addict, Bernard Stonehouse) points out not only the complexity of the penguin's life, but its ingenuity in overcoming these tribulations.

*Imagine yourself dressed in a thick, well padded waterproof suit, and required alternately to rest for hours in cold water, swim violently and beat your way ashore through surf, run, fight, make love and build a house, and then return to the cold sea. Without special mechanisms for ventilating the suit you would alternate between chilling and apoplexy, and be thoroughly uncomfortable most of the time.*

This is a prospect to chill even the most athletic of *Homo sapiens*, and is obvious that we, as a species, could not survive the rigors of a penguin life without mammoth aid from our technology. Even then we would be weighted down with so much impedimenta that we would not be able to undertake the extraordinary feats that penguins accomplish. Their air conditioning system is remarkable.



Apart from behavior and weight, a bird's first defense against cold is its feathers, as a mammal's is its fur. Here the penguins are all peculiarly and excellently provided for. They are more completely covered with feathers than almost any other birds and, insignificant as most of the individual feathers may seem, they are ideal for their purpose. When the feathers are lying flat, the scalelike exposed parts overlap and form a surface practically impermeable to wind or water. Furthermore, on the shafts below them are tufts that form an insulating layer almost like eiderdown. A second line of defense is formed by a likewise insulating layer of fat or blubber over most of the body below the skin.

I remember once spending several weeks filming a huge penguin colony in Patagonia. This colony numbered many thousands of birds and sitting in their midst was just about as peaceful as sitting in Piccadilly Circus. What with the to-ing and fro-ing of the adults, the screaming of the chicks waiting for their parents to regurgitate food, the periodical bray of one or both parents, and the steady hiss of the Patagonian wind, this combined with the strong smell of rotting corpses of fish and guano (there was high infant mortality), the experience was unforgettable. The most curious thing I noticed there was the reaction of the whole colony at exactly twelve noon every day. On the stroke of twelve, every bird would freeze, beak pointed skyward, wings outspread. It was as though the colony had suddenly become a black-and-white photograph. I could only presume that this unusual behavior (which lasted up to an hour or so) was a form of mass hysteria at the height of the heat. But in sight of this gigantic, unmoving colony of birds under the blazing sun was unforgettable. The colony was so far from Puerto Deseado (Port Desire) in Patagonia, and so I was interested in the fragment of history that Simpson divulges as to how this undesirable of townships got its name.

Francis Petty's account of Thomas Candish's (or Cavenish's) voyage around the world in 1586-88 has the earliest application of the name penguin to the southern birds known to

me, although there may be earlier. On 17 December 1586 the expedition entered a Patagonian harbor (in Petty's spelling "harborough") which was named Port Desire after Candish's flagship, The Desire. That locality, at 47° 44'S, 65° 56'W, still has the name given by Candish, but now translated into Puerto Deseado. I doubt whether any present resident knows the origin of the name; none did when I was there.

**A**LTHOUGH ONE OF the most popular of birds, the penguin has been, and still is, mistreated. In the early days of exploration, the harmless and, for the most part, helpless penguin provided a valuable source of food and fat to ships circumnavigating the globe. No less redoubtable a traveler than Sir Francis Drake recalls killing 3,000 of them to victual his ships. Penguin meat is doubtless only looked on with delight by someone who has subsisted on green salt pork and maggoty biscuits for a considerable period, but penguin eggs are another thing. Mr. Simpson says:

*The gathering of them has continued right down to our own day and has resulted in practically wiping out some populations of penguins. . . . In the Falkland Islands, until recently, November 9th was traditionally devoted to egg-hunting and was a holiday for the schoolchildren. The date (somewhat flexible) was of course chosen as one when penguin eggs would have been laid but would still be fresh. It was also chosen to coincide with the English Lord Mayor's Day, for reasons that I can't imagine. Egg gathering was, and is, by no means confined to the single day. Colonies near Port Stanley, the only town in the Falklands, were wiped out, but eggs were brought in by the tens of thousands in boats from more distant rookeries. The messes created when the fragile eggs were simply dumped into open holds hardly bear thinking about.*

I believe Mr. Simpson is somewhat sanguine about the effects that civilization is having, and will have, on penguins, and I do not altogether agree with his summation. He says:

*The encroachment of civilization is rarely good for wildlife,*

*and it is not good for penguins, but it has not yet affected them very widely or deeply. Most penguins breed in remote, scantily or not populated places. Where they do nest near cities, as in the vicinities of Melbourne, Australia, Dunedin, New Zealand, or Punta Arenas, Chile, they do sometimes seem a bit harassed, but they are still getting along. There have been arguments and complaints about possible effects of increasing tourist travel to the Subantarctic and Antarctic, and perhaps there is a future danger, but so far I cannot see any serious ill effects. Tourists are not numerous and they come and go quickly—there are no land accommodations whatever for them in those regions. They love the penguins and do not aim to harm them or even to disturb them unduly.*

I can only conclude that he does not know of the happy bands of nature-lovers who harass the yellow-eyed penguins in New Zealand, or the Patagonian ones with air rifles. Nor can he have seen the fairy or blue penguins in Australia being forced to come ashore to their nesting sites under searchlights, so that gawping crowds of penguin-lovers can watch them. The same people, when the parade of the little birds is over, drive away so carelessly that they kill and maim the very birds they have come to watch. (This is, of course, not to mention DDT, oil slicks, and other by-products of human endeavor.) However, fortunately and surprisingly, there are no penguin species in danger of extinction. Long may that continue to be so. As Mr. Simpson says:

*Penguins regale us further as images in cartoons, printed and animated. They are familiar as puppets and as dolls. They are also familiar as trademarks, including one for a whole library of books. They inspire some of us to travel far to see bones of their ancient relatives, to watch their living selves, and to come home and eventually write books about them.*

One is grateful to the author for having written such a delightful, amusing, and informative book about these enchanting and bizarre creatures that share the world with us. □

Gerald Durrell is honorary director of the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, Les Augrès Manor, Jersey, Channel Islands.

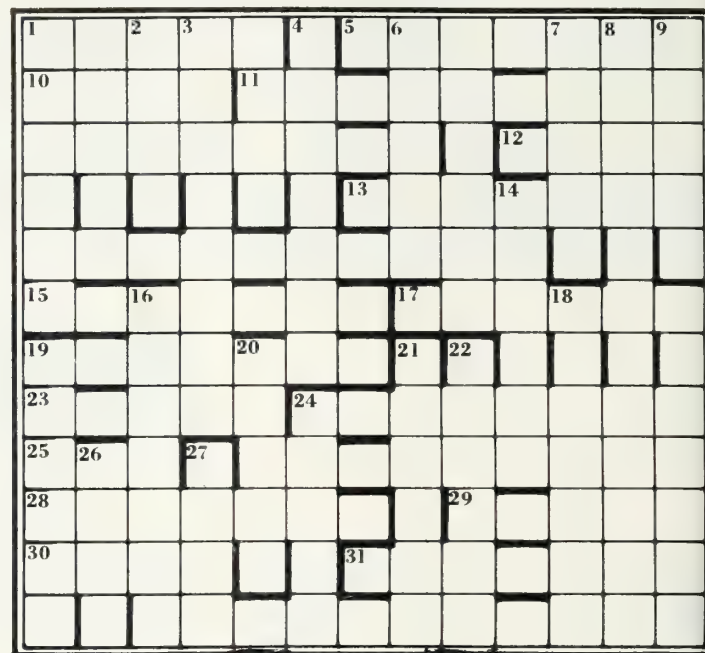


# PUZZLE

## AMUSEMENT PARK

by Richard Maltby, Jr.

**This month's instructions:** The unclued lights are related. Answers include two proper names; 4D and 20D are uncommon words. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.



### CLUES

#### ACROSS

1. All that remains when reconciler makes partial withdrawal (5)
5. Short section with pages and pages and pages (no longer) (7)
10. Incomplete lettering of Greenland? (4)
11. Lush in a tux, weaving, with half lump on the head, right in the middle (9)
12. Nice relative verbal bet (4)
13. Undeter tortuous work on a bridge (7)
15. Save redhead inside short passage (7)
17. In America, napery is what's served with drinks (6)
19. One who imitates a top writer being dissipated around fifty (7)
23. Husky is said to be a beast of burden (5)
24. Couple rented jewelry (8)
25. A soft drink leaves a ring, but only partly (3)
28. Backing dance during Christmastime—endless. It's enough to put you to sleep (7)
29. Reign with freedom and a flower! (5)
30. *Middlemarch*? In Latin? (That is to say, nearly) (4)

31. Express contentment. It's forward-looking and it gives you a footing (7)

#### DOWN

1. Rx for pierce wound (6)
2. Tiger is one ill-treated with a club (4)
3. What dentists are, sometimes, in beds (8)
4. Move up to dye picture printed from two plates (7)
6. The honor of a fictional detective (5)
7. Having made a bill, each tried to get elected first (3,2)
8. Rerun preteen shows out of series for producer (12)
9. Charger raised debts, after having change of heart (5)
14. Baseball player turned up outside and joined team (6)
16. OTo (7)
18. Entirely, for example, upset or making fast movement (7)
20. Paint up all but the head mistress (5)
21. For the big game, raise it one foot (6)
22.  $\frac{99}{99}$  of a figure? (6)
24. Is infinitively hit with a kind of jazz (5)
26. Rough, if soft-headed, Puritan (4)
27. Other slippery eels (4)

### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Amusement Park, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by August 9. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the September issue. Winners' names will be printed in the October issue. Winners of the June puzzle,

"Vicious Circles," are Carol and Joel Sennesh, Wayne, Pennsylvania; John Toronto, Ontario; and S. Porter, Vacaville, California.

**Note for beginners:** The instructions above are the special instructions for month's puzzle. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For the complete introduction to clue-solving, which appeared in the January 1976 issue, to The Reprint Department, enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope.



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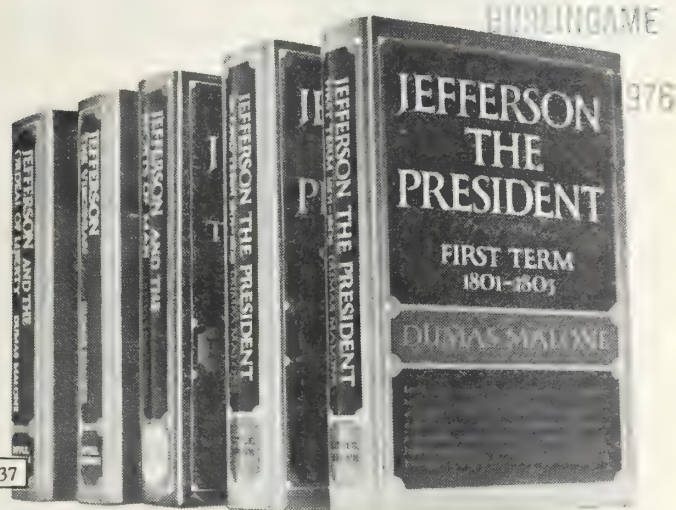
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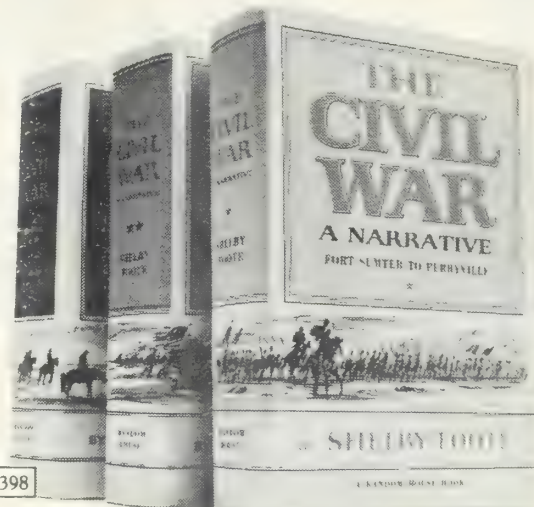


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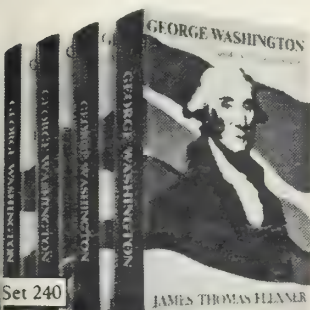


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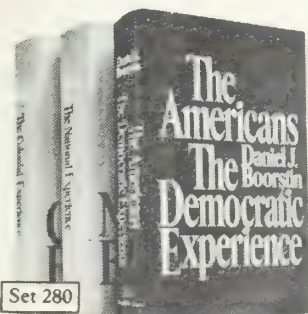


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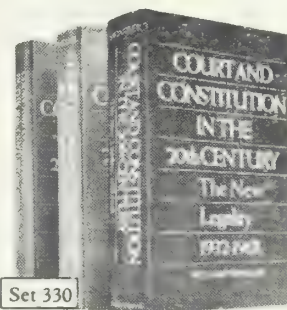


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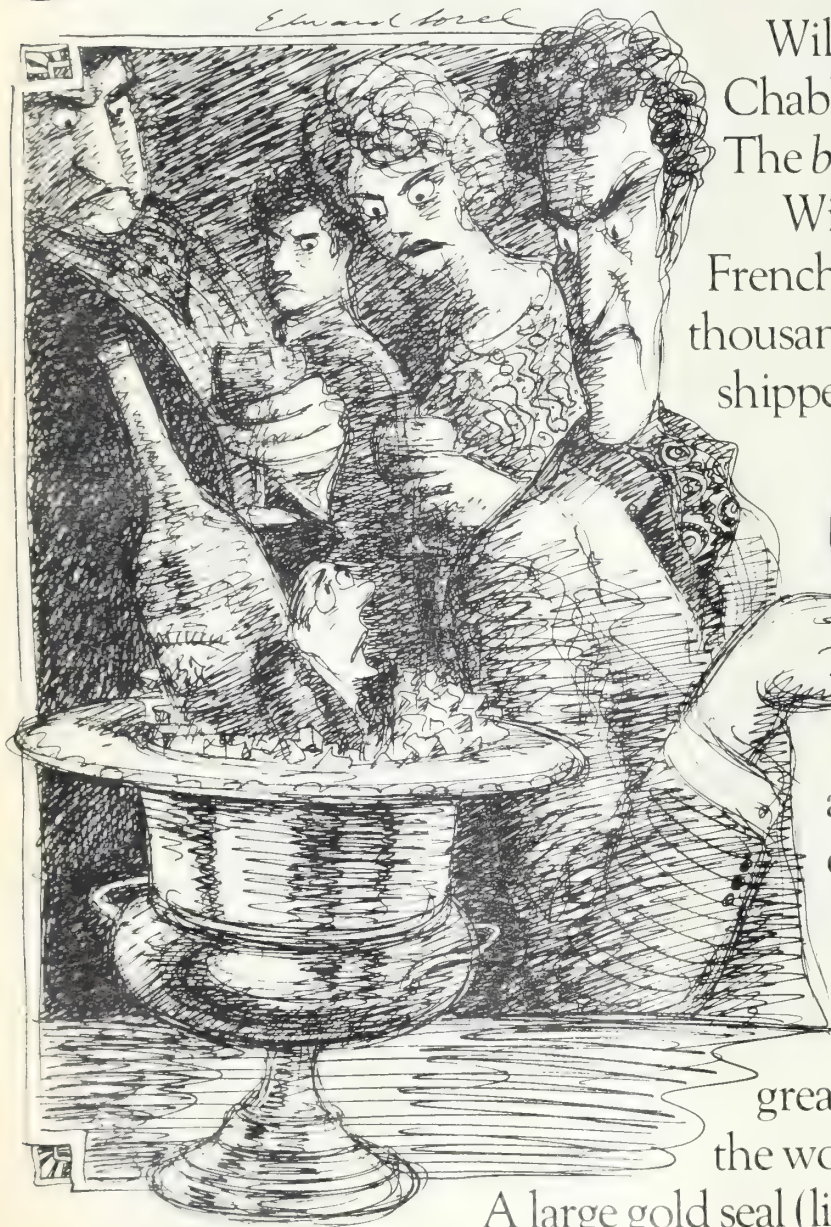
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# A NATION OF DREAMERS

The American preference for what isn't there

by Lewis H. Lapham

*Heard melodies are sweet, but  
those unheard  
Are sweeter.*

—John Keats  
"Ode on a Grecian Urn"

**T**HE AMERICAN preference for the invisible never ceases to astonish me. Just when I begin to think that I live in a materialist society, I find myself surrounded by people who choose to believe in what isn't there.

My observations do not conform to the official portraits of the American character. The American is said to be a practical man who believes in what he can see and measure. The United States supposedly inherited not only the earth but also the traditions of the eighteenth century mind—skeptical, inquiring, and given to experiment. This assumption receives the support of the many lobbyists for the idea of American pragmatism, who, despite their political and regional differences, agree on the triumph of reason and the scientific method. The artistic interests talk about the prevailing indifference to the ineffable; businessmen say that maybe they don't know the difference between Beethoven and Molière, but they sure as hell know the difference between profit and loss; politicians mention "hard realities"; and the lost tribe of the counter-culture speaks of philistines squandering a third of the world's resources on the manufacture of gaudy baubles. All the witnesses testify to the preeminence of facts.

Not so. The United States is a nation of dreamers, captivated by the power of metaphor. Whenever possible the American substitutes the symbol for whatever it is that the symbol represents. Social critics

sometimes deplore the rapaciousness with which Americans consume the goods and services of a spendthrift economy. The critics fail to notice that the objects mean nothing in themselves, that the material acquisitions serve as tedious preliminaries to the desired immateriality.

**T**HIS POINT WAS made plain on the Fourth of July in New York Harbor, in the words of a sign propped against a fence at the southern end of Manhattan Island. Facing the sea and directed toward the largest flotilla of ships assembled anywhere in the world in more than 100 years, the sign read: "Welcome to Battery Park City." This was a fine sentiment but entirely abstract. Battery Park City is an empty lot, a barren mound of mud and sand.

The transcendental bias of the American mind can turn the whole world into metaphor. Consider the Mafia, or the domino theory. The best available evidence suggests that there is no such thing as a Mafia, that American business simply undertakes both legitimate and illegitimate enterprises, and that sometimes people get killed. But nobody likes that interpretation. Too many people have too much of a vested interest in the preservation of the dark romance. What would become of television police dramas, or the prizes for investigative reporting? The domino theory described an imaginary mechanism on a map. To protect the integrity of the metaphor, the United States sent an army to Asia. Further examples can be extended through an appropriately infinite sequence. Nobody wants to know the name of

*Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.*

Deep Throat, the invisible source of the information that led to the Watergate spectacle and a President's abdication. If the man acquired an identity, complete with motives and a house in the suburbs, he no longer could be imagined as omniscient. Entire vocabularies of symbolic jargon—academic, bureaucratic, scientific—describe entire kingdoms of non-existent thought. Modern art depends on abstract theories that explain the absence of paint. American restaurants substitute the hyperbole of their menus for the taste of their food; so also do pornographic magazines publish literary essays that hardly anybody bothers to read. They appear as symbols of an imaginary conversation. The television image, which is itself a metaphor, goes forth to an invisible audience. Jimmy Carter succeeds as a political candidate because he presents the voters with an emptiness they can fill with images of their own.

Or consider the metaphor of New York City. By any material standard (comparison with Paris, say, or even with London) the city must be judged deficient. From a height or a distance it can be seen as beautiful, but the texture of the streets consists of fear, noise, ugliness, and anger. It is the metaphysical promise, the sense of the unseen but imminent possibility, that gives the city its character. Walking around beggarly lying in the street, the citizens carry on fierce discussions of social justice; they speculate about the interior dialogue of politicians whom they have never seen, about the chance of war in countries to which they have never traveled. The less they know about the subject in question, the more easily they can escape the coils of specific fact and



boat into the sphere of abstraction.

The unheard melodies on John Keats's Grecian urn fill out the implied harmonies in almost the whole of American literature. The writers remembered for their communion with the unknowable, among them Melville, Whitman, and Fitzgerald, lose themselves in what Irving Howe recently described as "a sacred emptiness of space," in which each man becomes both performer and pioneer, inventing himself as he clears the wilderness of his mortality. The modern school of writing, much praised by the critics who teach theories of imagination, follows the tradition into the thin atmospheres of surrealism. In the novels of Robert Coover, Donald Barthelme, and Thomas Pynchon, the narrative exists only to be discarded. Like the hulk of a first-stage rocket, it carries the author's circus of ideas into the metaphor of space. Except in figurative way, as representatives of abstraction, the people in the novels have neither meaning or substance.

The eloquent theories of politicians and professors of sociology seldom withstand the judgment of practical result because, more often than not, they are meant to be appreciated as symbols. The politicians have no choice in this because they seldom see the things their laws deride. They talk about housing and federal health insurance, about poverty levels and public transportation, but they do not ride in subways or wait in lines for food stamps. Like the view of New York City from a helicopter, the idea of racial equality is beautiful as an abstraction. If somebody interprets it in a literal-minded way, mistaking the symbolic for the real, well, then, obviously the thing won't work. The race riots in Boston result from an error in translation. When Tom Wicker spoke encouragingly to the prisoners at Attica about the "inequities of the system," he offered them a metaphor instead of information. A number of them died because nobody told them that journalism is a form of fiction.

**A**N OBSESSION WITH metaphor also governs the conduct of American business. I have noticed that few highly placed executives understand money as a commodity. Perhaps this

is because they almost never see it. The transfer of huge sums takes place as a sequence of abstractions projected on a screen. Making their way upward through the company hierarchy, once knowledgeable engineers learn to speak the ritual language of hierophants. On the highest tiers of organizations that resemble Babylonian ziggurats, the officials walk solemnly to and fro, bowing to one another in their circumambulations and making grave gestures of consensus. Every now and then they pause to examine the sky through the modern equivalents of the astrolabe—computer print-outs, projections of oil reserves, summaries of the consumer-price index, et cetera. The technology furnishes them with metaphors.

Even the American approach to sex proceeds along the lines of religious pilgrimage. The confessional testimony, most of it in the form of best-selling disappointment, suggests that not many people (at least not those who write about it) find much pleasure in the act of love. Quite often they would rather be in Philadelphia, but they have been sent forth to find meaning and success. Like all the other toys in the department-store window, the sexual object must be acquired as proof of something else. Nobody knows quite what, but, presumably (*vide* the manuals, clinics, advisories to the lovelorn), something beyond the merely human. Together with the Holy Grail, the ideal orgasm remains just over the horizon of their experience. Both men and women talk about their liaisons in the way that explorers used to write about their voyaging in unknown seas. By keeping logs and chronologies, they plot their positions in the world.

The tendency to think in symbols also accounts for the otherwise baffling American perception of time. It has often been demonstrated that Americans retain little more than a dim notion of the past. The universities continue to report a lack of interest in anything that took place as long ago as last week; a Gallup poll published early this year showed that only 50 percent of the respondents could remember what was the significance of the year 1776. People who cannot imagine the past cannot envision the future. The sense of time falls in upon itself, collapsing like

an accordion into the evangelical present. The effect is greatly magnified by the symbolic nature of the television image, in which the visible part stands for the invisible whole. If three or four black men carrying signs can be made to represent the discontent of the Negro race, then they have been raised to the power of metaphor. The confinement in the present imposes a necessary preoccupation with what isn't there. Nothing can exist, because anything so foolish as to make itself visible must submit to the passage of time. To live always at the point of becoming makes it difficult to enjoy, much less to sustain, the sense of being.

I cannot imagine a state of mind less consistent with the orthodox definitions of materialism. If dissatisfaction becomes imbued with the significance of a religious quest, then the satisfied man stands condemned as a heretic. To admit being satisfied is to confess the squalor of one's aspirations. Which is why the traditional disappointment with success follows from the romanticism of youth. Having acquired the object of what he thought was his desire, the young man cannot feel the emotional correlative he had previously assigned to the grasping of that object. In the midst of his possessions he mourns the loss of innocence. Anybody who neglects to offer the conventional denials risks alliance with the Evil One, i.e., with people who know or have what they want. God forbid that a man should enjoy the things of the world, that he should delight in its fruitfulness and surround himself with friends, works, and families.

In its courageous aspects, the longing for the invisible expresses the spirit of the American frontier. The *Mayflower* sails in search of the unknown Thomas Jefferson; Orville Wright imagines the flight of the unseen SST. But, at least for the time being, the dreaming American mind appears to have retreated into the caves of the supernatural. The crowds gathered in the tent shows of wandering evangelicals remind me of the crowds shuffling through the neon markets of sexual illusion. The preacher and the whore promise the transcendent moment of an escape from time. It is an escape that even Houdini found impossible to perform. □



# LETTERS

## The happiness implosion

Tom Wolfe's fabulous fables of American life ["The Intelligent Co-ed's Guide to America," July] complement nicely the current rash of full-page and double-page ads by corporate executives (tax-deductible, no doubt) exhorting us to support tax-"reform" laws that will enable the rich to become still richer. As a sycophant to the wealthy and powerful, Tom Wolfe has no peer but William Buckley.

I wonder though about this happiness explosion he's been writing about for the past decade. I live in the same country Tom Wolfe says he does, and what I've noticed is not an explosion but a thunderous muffled implosion, a deep withdrawal into some private inner space. Happy smiling faces, yes, but in the eyes what Korean war veterans used to call "the forty-mile stare."

An M.D. friend explained the whole thing to me the other night. Tom Wolfe's happiness explosion began in this country concurrently with the widespread use of Valium and Librium, those little capsules of jellied bliss which are now manufactured by the billions each year. For the many Americans for whom alcohol, marijuana, heroin, cocaine, et cetera are not enough, it is Valium—not vibrators—which helps them make it through the day.

EDWARD ABBEY  
Moab, Utah

### TOM WOLFE REPLIES:

The logic is instructive. If one writes—as I did in *Harper's*—that intellectuals embrace certain ideas simply because they're fashionable, then one is a tool of the oil companies and the plutocrats. This is

the same mentality that says because Sen. Frank Church criticized the CIA, he is a tool of the KGB. (Why else would he do something that pleases them?) As for the rest, I urge Mr. Abbey and his doctor friend to get out of the den and actually talk to people. They may be in for a very pleasant surprise (without pills).

Thanks for Tom Wolfe's "Intelligent Co-ed's Guide to America," whatever the title may mean. With his usual wit and polish, he has speared the inflated balloons of America's literary-intellectual prophets of doom.

For most of my adult professional life, which spans the middle part of the century, I have functioned on the fringe of the O'Hare world Wolfe lampoons, teaching in large and small colleges, reading, studying, and trying to follow, usually with bemused confusion, the apocalyptic flights of these intellectual critics.

In the early 1940s, at the University of Michigan, I could not join the budding intellectuals who followed world Communism's banner so ardently. In the first place, I had serious questions about the philosophy. In the second, most of my radical contemporaries, like many of today, seemed motivated as much by personal neurotic needs as by any enlightened desire to uplift the masses. By their standards, I was the masses, coming, not as most of them had from liberal, well-to-do families, but from poor Kentucky dirt farmers transplanted to Detroit's factories. None of the people I grew up with considered themselves part of the masses. Life was hard for them, which came as no surprise, for working people are always realists, much more than the intellectuals who, from

their ivory towers, attempt to diagnose and prescribe for the ills of the American working and middle classes, whom they secretly fear and hold in contempt.

The same intellectuals continue with us, doing studies and statistical surveys to show the disaffection of the American worker, the death of the American family, and whatever other theory they wish to justify with the pseudoscientific mumbo jumbo of statistics. This outpouring probably does not affect too greatly the average man, because he has never heard of the writers and speakers and wouldn't go a mile from his home to hear one of them speak.

But college students hear them, and many of them believe totally, with a resulting loss of will that may keep them from doing what work in the world it might otherwise be possible for them to do.

As a society and as individuals, we are much in danger of falling victim to the self-fulfilling prophecy. If every social scientist on the lecture circuit tells us the family is dead, why should we work to shore up this institution? If this society is indeed the most racist, the most aggressive, the most materialistic, and the most imperialistic, what can one person do?

I am not a Pollyanna. This is not a perfect society, but there is no perfect society, given the nature of man. If it is not the "best of all possible worlds," it is probably not the worst either. I'd like to see the literary-intellectual savants practice a little humility in their prophesying.

So, Tom Wolfe, keep writing. Puncture the inflated with your wit and help us all have the guts to believe the "heresy" of our "own eyes."

EVELYN CLAXTON  
West Frankfort, Ill.



# SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

\$1.50

*September 1976*

## Three billion more people will join us at the dinner table between now and 2000 A.D.

## How in the world will we feed them?

That question provides the occasion for the publication of the September issue of *SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN*, devoted in its entirety to *Food and Agriculture*. The answers come from a distinguished group of authors who are otherwise engaged in implementing their answers in the laboratory—and in the gardens, greenhouses, rice paddies, croplands and ranges of the world.

Pundits and publicists have put abroad a great deal of misleading information on this subject. There is wide acceptance of the proposition that the exploding populations of the poor ("underdeveloped") countries have overrun their agricultural resources. The "lifeboat ethic" instructs the people of rich ("developed") countries to be ready to repel boarding parties.

In fact, the peoples of the underdeveloped countries have outgrown not their resources but the subsistence-agriculture technology that has held them in misery from the dawn of history. The demonstrated agricultural technology of the industrially developed countries could multiply world agricultural output by more than a dozen times. It could support a well-fed population of 40 billion. This is a much larger number than that at which, it is now reckoned, the world population will stabilize some time in the next century.

What is required is the transfer of modern agricultural technology from the developed to the underdeveloped countries. That is the answer to the 2000 A.D. question. The fact that it is now technologically possible to banish hunger from human experience carries immense force against the political, economic and social obstacles that stand in the way.

For regular readers of *SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN*, this September single-topic issue supplies the latest installment in a continuing story. Starting in 1950, with "The Food Problem" by Lord Boyd-Orr, this magazine has reported step-by-step the revolution in agricultural technology that helped to double world food output in the years since.

Our readers have kept abreast of all the other developments in science that have made this period the most momentous in intellectual history. Consider what has occurred: the unlocking of the genetic code; the discovery of continental drift; the proof of uncertainty in logic; the recognition of the role of toolmaking in our biological evolution; the sudden arrival of solid-state electronics, the microcomputer, the laser; the elucidation of the nerve circuitry that organizes perception; the penetration of the structure of the fundamental particles.

To our readers all this has been reported by the scientists who did the work. (More than 60 Nobel prize-winners have written for *SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN*, nearly all of them in advance of their recognition by Stockholm.) The collaboration of our editors in the preparation of text and illustration makes this work accessible to a growing worldwide readership.

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## Why Rome fell

Julian Pelikan's illuminating study "What Gibbon Knew" [July] suggests that the time is ripe for a reconsideration of the question, Why did Rome fall?

Gibbon, admitting other contributory causes, blamed Christianity. Within a few years, this idea had been completely rebutted. Christianity had made possible the revivification of the Roman Empire. Thomas Hodgkin, writing a century after Gibbon, blamed the fall of Rome primarily on a collapse of sexual morality. The collapse was very real. But it occurred before the time of Julius Caesar. By no means all pagan Romans were licentious. Julian the Apostate—an unjust title for one of the best emperors—emphatically was not. Yet somehow the Western Roman Empire simply collapsed in ruins during the reign of the Emperor Honorius, who nevertheless ruled for twenty-eight years and died in his bed. How could this be? The answer is very simple. Honorius, a person of minimal intellect, though of some occasional

kindness—he put an end to the gladiatorial games—survived because it was not worth anyone's while to kill him. He was, in effect, a dummy, who could be used by anyone who could get control of his person. So the towering prestige of the emperor was destroyed. So, was the Empire destroyed simply because at a critical moment it was ruled by a near-imbecile? Clearly not. This was only an unlucky accident which exposed a far older and deeper weakness.

The fundamental defect of Rome, early and late, was that it was a rich man's society. Only a rich man could be "honest"; the rest were "the humble." Now, wealth is not in itself an evil thing. But in itself it cannot even buy safety for its possessor. Rich men, the senators, ruled the Roman Empire. To protect themselves, they had the Roman army—a comically tiny but highly professional long-service cordon of well-equipped troops. But the senators wanted to be protected at bargain-basement prices. And it was not considered safe to put weapons into the hands of the humble. So "barbarians"—outsiders—were hired. And the senators were able

to evade their taxes. They forced on the government a soak-the-poor tax structure. The humble were fully aware of this. So they began to rebel. They joined in gangs to resist. If they had been left alone, they would soon have seized control of the government, with what results we simply do not know.

But at the same time the pasturelands of Eurasia were burning up with drought. This drove the Huns westward. The Huns, nomadic horsemen and archers, overrode and drove before them a medley of other peoples. In one wave after another, these peoples hit the Rhine and Danube frontiers, which crumpled. All bets were off. The senators lost their wealth. The Huns produced one leader, Attila, of real genius. The young, virile Hunnish empire fell into complete and irreparable ruin. But so did the ancient and recovering rich man's culture of Rome. And out of that ruin, very slowly, arose the civilization we know. There were men who lived in the midst of this vast confusion and saw what was wrong—Salvianus of Marseilles, Pelagius the Briton, and others. They made a difference. The ruin was not so great as it would have been without them. But, generally speaking, they were not heeded. So Rome fell.

PAUL JOHNSTONE  
St. Louis, Mo.

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## Shattered complacency

Re: "Last Courtesies" [by Ella Leffland, July]. I knew Lillian right off in the first two paragraphs. By the time I reflected on the story, I knew too why I was impressed. It has the quality of the Faulkner story "A Rose for Emily," in which one cares about the poor old crone and is ambivalent toward suspicions of the outcome, and it even reminded me of Wharton's "Roman Fever," since the reader knows complacency will be shattered but dreads it anyway. I am unfamiliar with Leffland's other work, but I intend to undo that ignorance as soon as possible. "Last Courtesies" is an architectural wonder, from the title to the final sentence, and while I'm not 57, an widowed, and I like Wagner, I am haunted by the reading of it.

NANCY K. KNAUL  
Lakeland, Minn.



# "Pollution" is a dirty word. So is "unemployment"

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For example, it's expected that our country is going to need a lot more steelmaking capacity—about 30 million added tons by 1983.

Gearing up to meet that anticipated demand would (1) help maintain jobs in the steel industry, and (2) create jobs for thousands and thousands of people in other industries—in construction, in equipment manufacturing, and in scores of service industries.

But expansion of this magnitude takes vast sums of money. And over the past inflation-recession years, we just haven't been able to generate enough money to do that job.

So we had to make a tough

choice. We had to "stretch out" the completion of a number of expansion projects we had under way. That cost people jobs.

**One program we had to continue: pollution control**

So far, Bethlehem has spent approximately \$400 million to clean up a major portion of the pollutants from the air and water we use. In an effort to meet existing laws and regulations, we have many more projects under way or anticipated in the near future. Cost? About \$600 million over the next five years.

**Is there any relief in sight?**

Depending upon how far regulatory agencies go in stringent interpretation of the present laws and regulations, we may be faced with spending hundreds of millions more to try to remove the last traces of pollutants. We do not believe that this would be money well spent.

Attempting to remove the last increment of pollution involves new and uncertain technology.

The attempt will consume a

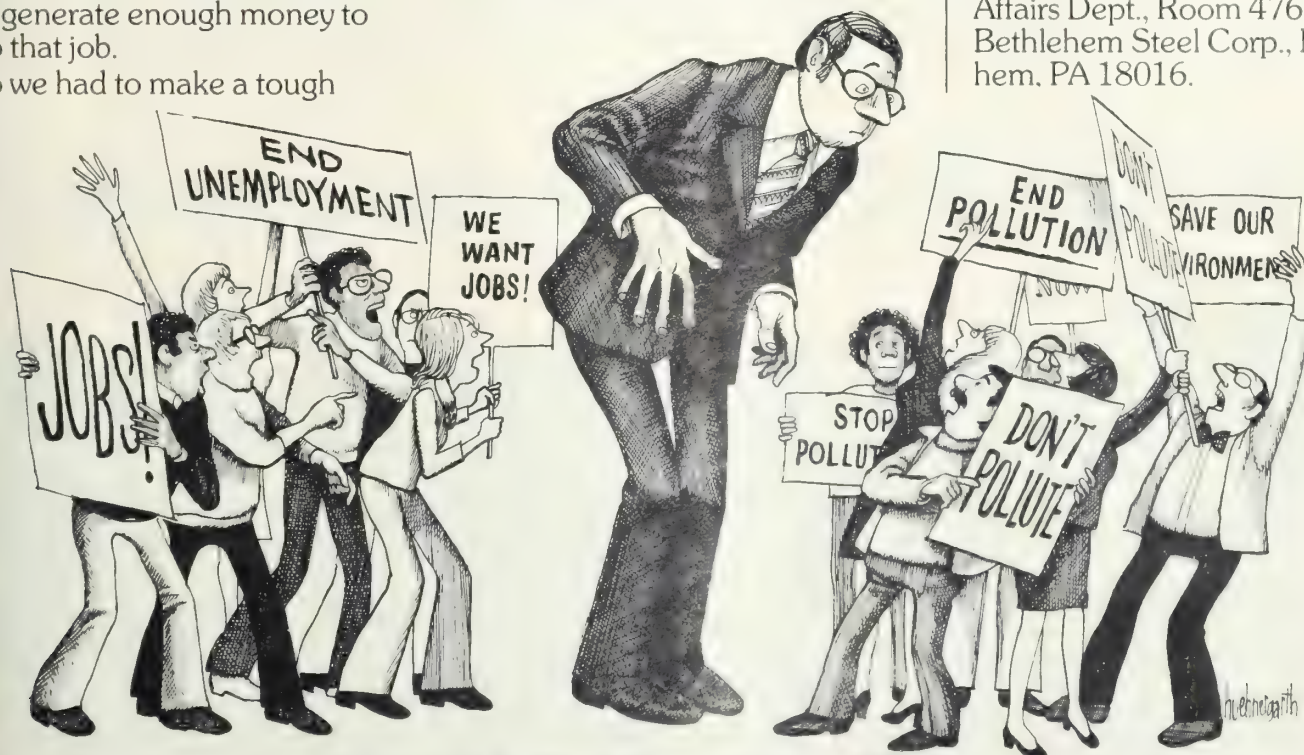
considerable amount of scarce energy and natural resources. And, in many cases, it will merely transfer pollution problems to the power companies or chemical manufacturers.

**Is it time for a rearrangement of priorities?**

We are faced as a nation with troublesome alternatives. Do we continue our headlong rush to implement some of the air and water clean-up standards that have yet to be proved necessary—or even sound—or shall we give equal consideration to jobs, our energy requirements, capital needs, and other demands for social priorities?

We believe the national interest now requires that we face up to the dual necessity of preserving our environment while at the same time assuring economic progress.

Our booklet, "Steelmaking and the Environment," tells more about what we're doing to help solve the problems of pollution. For a free copy, write: Public Affairs Dept., Room 476-H, Bethlehem Steel Corp., Bethlehem, PA 18016.



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the two centuries that followed produced a revolution in artistic taste; and selected furniture, decoration and art in the whole civilised world.

Raleigh Trevelyan's narrative *The Shadow of Vesuvius: Pompeii AD 79* gives a striking personal impression of this ghostly city where, in Shelley's words, one hears 'the autumnal leaves / ... the light footfalls of spirits passing / ... through the streets'. He gives, too, an entertaining history of the slow strip-ping of time which gradually, tantalisingly, revealed one of the biggest store-houses of treasure the world has seen, the source of much of our knowledge of daily life in the Roman world.

A fine book.

John Letts

# Four Complaints about

## The Folio Society

takes a little while to adjust to the familiar. Several thousand book lovers in the United States have made that mental leap in recent years, and now belong to a distinctly unusual organization which is neither book club nor publisher, but a little bit of both.

For instance, it does not mass-produce large editions by photo-offset. Nor does it lure you into buying on credit, use a computer system for mailing or billing, or despatch 'selections' which you have forgotten to say you did not want.

Most eccentric of all, it pays *all* your mailing costs from London, England -



*The last eruption of Vesuvius in 1944.*

wherever you live: West Coast or East Coast; Plains, Georgia or Prudhoe Bay.

Even the complaints it receives are unusual. Here are some samples.

W.M.M. of North Andover, Massachusetts, complains that 'I have some fifteen thousand volumes crowding my shelves . . . But I love John Aubrey so much I cannot resist a new edition of *Brief Lives*. Every year you publish something I want, even though I am overloaded with books.' That is why we balance our list so carefully from the by-ways *as well as* the highways of literature and history.

W.K. of Northport, N.Y., complains: 'The advertisements are clever . . . they presume a great conspiracy is spreading untruths about The Folio Society.' We deny any intention to deceive. We err – or *try* to err – in the direction of making advertisements as interesting to read as the newspapers and magazines they appear in.

A.S. of Flossmoor, Illinois, complains: 'I like your service. I like the way you send me the wrong book sometimes

(and then write a nice letter of apology) – it adds a nice touch of un-computerised humanity.’ Avoiding computers doesn’t render us immune from making mistakes –but if we do, we correct them politely and speedily.

A.V.H. of Minnesota complains: 'Mail delay is a growing problem here in the US, but nothing more you can do about this—we have been fighting the battle for a century without success.' Enough said. We do find, however, that international parcels often reach members *more* quickly than internal US mail parcels.

Members join The Folio Society in fact for a variety of reasons – because they like the civilised atmosphere, because they like good book design . . . but mainly because they like the books. They are interesting to read, attractive to look at, and modestly priced (the average price is still only a little over \$11.00 post free, complete with slip-case). And you don't have to cross the Atlantic to look at them. Today you can see all the 120 or so titles in the list at The Folio Gallery in midtown Manhattan, (just off Park Avenue, at 113 East 55th Street) where you can browse among five times as many books as you see here, and purchase on the spot if you wish.

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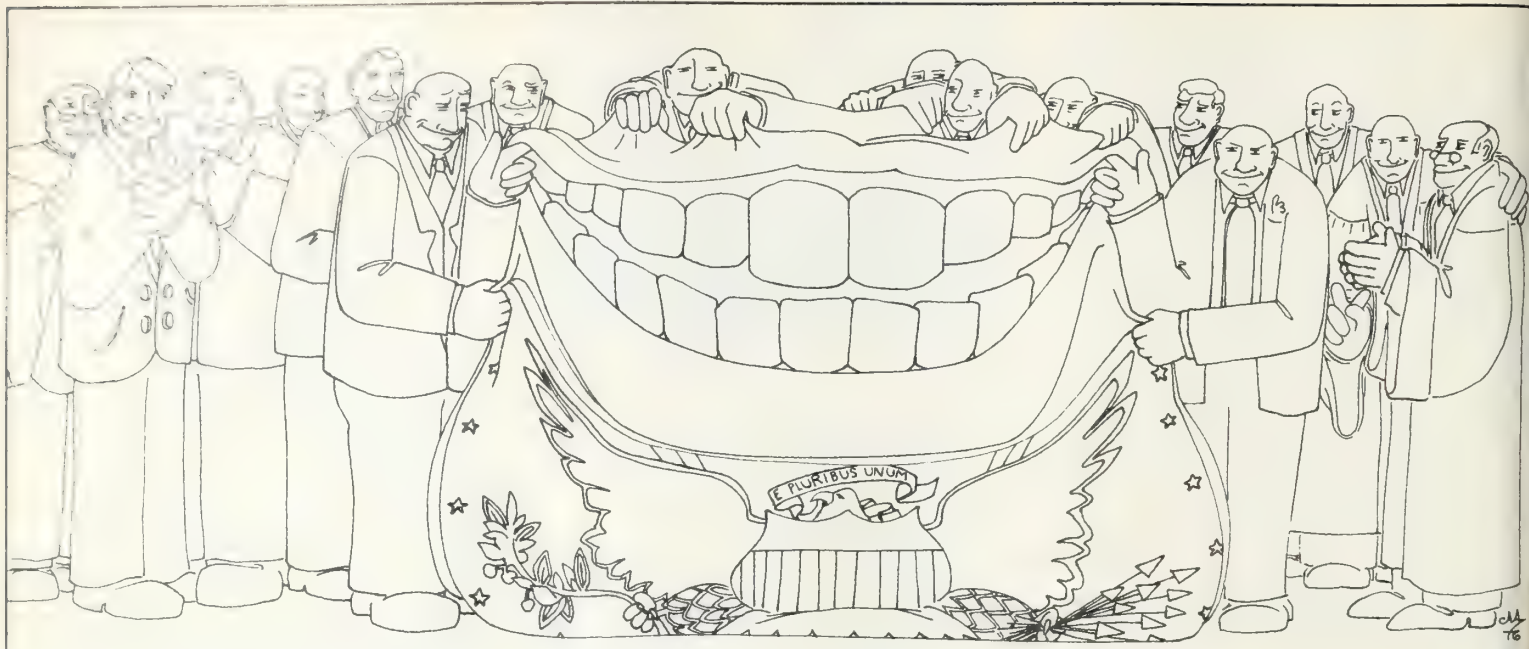
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# THE DIXIE SMILE



What it means to be a Good Ole Boy

by Johnny Greene

**A**VERELL HARRIMAN, then governor of New York, stood beside the fireplace in the south Alabama hunting lodge owned by the late, mad Alabama Congressman Frank "Everything is Made for Love" Boykin. It was 1956 and Harriman was campaigning for the Democratic Presidential nomination he would lose that summer to Adlai Stevenson in Chicago. Boykin had rounded up a contingent of local Southern Democrats to meet Harriman, including James E. ("Kissin' Jim") Folsom, then governor of Alabama and one of the most enigmatic, unpredictable and powerful figures in Deep South politics.

"Show 'um, Jim! You show 'um!" someone yelled from the crowd as Folsom went forward to meet Harriman.

"Jim'll show 'um! Always does!" another shouted.

Folsom paused to toast the visiting governor. Some of those standing nearby said it looked at first as if Big Jim were about to bless Harriman with his political endorsement. But those who saw the whole thing from start to finish said Big Jim never intended to do anything other than exactly what he did—which was, in full view of everyone, to urinate on Harriman's leg.

"Jim, my Gawd, why'd you go and do a thing like that, much less to a visitor down here?" Boykin said, after Harriman was rushed to safety and a change of clothes.

"Hell, Frank," said Folsom, "everybody in the whole South always wanted to piss on the governor of New York, and I just done it."

**I**DON'T BELIEVE this story is true, though I know the sentiments expressed in it are. I have never seen a white Southerner fail to crack up over it, slap his kneecap or the shoulder of someone sitting nearby, and say: "Ole Jim, he really showed 'um that time, didn't he?"

When I heard the story repeated this summer by a liberal Alabama supporter of Jimmy Carter, and I was brought again into the foot-stomping laughter in its wake, I realized it is no longer just a horrifying regional anecdote of misbehavior and crudeness. Twenty years after the Folsom-Harriman meeting, "showing 'um" is still the governing principle of Southern Democratic politics. The only changes within this historical precedent have come through the New South's "new re-

*Johnny Greene is a free-lance writer based in Alabama.*

spectability." "Showing 'um" no longer means a knee-jerk incontinence or a blatant stand in a school-house door. It more readily manifests itself in the obfuscating smile of a Good Ole Boy who is touching on the one issue the defeated South has always immediately understood—being "born again." Though Jimmy Carter and his fellow owners of the New South appear respectable when compared to the George Wallace-Lester Maddox variety of Southern Democrats, they are only the latest wave of Confederate cadets. Dixie has sent out to prolong its hopeless battle against the alien, in fidel, and conquering North. They have answered to the same irrational forces of revenge and retribution that have characterized Southern Democratic politics in the years since Robert E. Lee was reduced to horse bartering at Appomattox.

The classic, white-haired, frock coated Southern Democrats of the turn of the century preached a political religion of immediate vengeance against the North. They promised redemption to a South humiliated over its defeat. They forged a political religion of piety and hate that delivered vague hints of a second secession, a Second Coming of Dixie, a born-again Calvinist-Baptist theocracy that would redeem the



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South. It was all they had. An economic wasteland in the aftermath of the Civil War, the South had no resources with which to rebuild itself, economically or commercially. That program of resurgence would have to wait until a gifted team of young, energetic Southerners went to Washington with Franklin D. Roosevelt, reached power through the seniority system in the House and Senate, and routed millions of federal dollars into the South in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Before the New Dealers arrived, Southern Democratic politicians turned to the one volatile issue remaining—the South's primitive religiosity and spirituality. They promised the masses of illiterate and poverty-stricken rednecks who rallied to them a political-religious act of retribution. "Showing 'um" became a mission, a Southern crusade. But it was only open to those who had been born again. And in the context of this political-religious-Christian statement, being born again was now another way of "showing 'um," of getting even. It placed its adherents inside a Calvinist elect and excluded the two groups they held responsible for their defeat—the godless, Republican North and the South's traditional scapegoat, the blacks. And it was inside the white frame churches at the crossroads of Dixie that the South's hopes for retribution and revenge not only were kept alive but reached their illogical conclusion. The hardest-shelled of the groups prayed for an immediate apocalypse, their more moderate brothers patiently waited for Armageddon, and a few prescient believers looked forward to the day one of their very own could step forward in fanged Calvinist wrath against the world of the nonelect. For Southern Democrats it was a gold mine.

**G**OD ALONE KNOWS how many Negroes were lynched and murdered by his words," wrote Ralph McGill of Georgia's fireball Tom Watson. The same holds true of many other Southern Democrats, from James K. Vardaman and Theodore Bilbo of Mississippi, Pitchfork Ben Tillman of South Carolina and Cotton Tom Heflin of Alabama, to Orval Faubus of Arkansas, Ross Barnett of Mississip-

pi, George Wallace of Alabama, and Lester Maddox of Georgia. As the race issue gradually became the focal point for "showing 'um," Southern Democrats willfully carried it to its own perverse conclusion at every opportunity, whether filibustering antilynching bills or repeatedly affirming a belief in ethnic purity. Their legacy to any successor is the years of suffering they imposed on the South's blacks—a legacy that can never be redeemed.

Riding across Mississippi on an eight-wheeled lumber wagon drawn by white oxen, dressed in a white suit, with his long black hair falling on his shoulders, James K. Vardaman swept into the Mississippi governorship in 1902. He called himself "The Great White Chief" and promised voters a repeal of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Delta planters and Mississippi molehill rednecks stood side by side to have their racial hates and fears fanned by Vardaman. There were no objections when he closed all state schools to Mississippi blacks.

Hugo Black first made it to Washington in 1927 by waging a vicious, anti-Catholic, Klan-supported campaign for the United States Senate. Black had endeared himself to the voters of Alabama by defending a client who had murdered a Roman Catholic priest. In his defense, Black reasoned with the jury that the murder was justifiable because the priest had been trying to convert his client's daughter to Roman Catholicism. The jury voted the man not guilty. When Black was later elevated to the Supreme Court by Franklin Roosevelt, H. L. Mencken suggested: "Hugo won't have to buy any new robes. All he'll have to do is dye his old ones black."

While George Wallace was conducting the all-out racist campaign which first won him the governorship of Alabama in 1962, he promised voters he would stand in the schoolhouse door to prevent integration. But another campaign promise he made came even closer to the essence of the Southern Democrat's manipulation of the political religion of Dixie.

"While I am governor," Wallace said, "there will be no liquor in the governor's mansion of Alabama."

Like his predecessors for a century and his successors across the

South today, Wallace did not elaborate on a program for improved roads or highway construction, an expansion and improvement of Alabama's educational system, or a reform of the state's punitive tax structure or its baroque legislature. He did not offer the voters a consistent program for the state because he knew it wasn't necessary. He settled again on the irrational and the absurd: racial prejudice and the Calvinist's self-righteous though doubtful abstinence. The voters loved it.

Wallace set into motion the process that would eventually lead to the nomination and possible election of one of his fellow Southerners to be President of the United States. He accepted the political formula, "All you have to do is shout 'nigger' to handle the legislature." Then, in a conversation with a member of his Cabinet who warned him that his continued defiance of the federal courts might bring troops into Alabama, Wallace said: "If they put one federal troop in this state, I can be elected President."

Although this blind assumption by Wallace did not prove true, it represented the way in which the politics of "showing 'um" kept him in power in Alabama for four terms, and it characterizes the blind, dependent faith the rest of the South has placed in its Democrats. As the South has continued to buy the emotional leadership its Democrats have sold, its much-anticipated resurgence has been retarded from generation to generation.

**T**HERE ARE TWO histories of the South in the 1960s. One is the history of the fire-breathing demagogue standing in the path of racial reconciliation. The other is the history of the "Good South" as it perceives itself—paternalistic and benign, patient to the point of toddling, among the elect of Christianity, too polite to be deliberately vulgar or offensive, but simultaneously dangerous in its support of the racist leadership of the South and dangerous in its own embracing self-acceptance. This is the world of the Good Ole Boy, the country hick from down in the hollow, his innocent, God-fearing eyes scanning the world of corruption laid out before him at every



crossroads grocery store, supermarket, and shopping center as he makes his way to the eternally damned metropolis his neighbors and friends reassure him he can save with the sword Calvin put in Christ's hand.

It is said that during his campaign for governor of Georgia, Jimmy Carter promised to build a nuclear reactor at Georgia Tech. A couple of years into his administration, when there was no reactor on the drawing boards, Carter was reminded of this campaign promise.

"I'm just a country boy," he said, "and you city boys never did understand the way we talk."

Carter did not have to piss on the scientists at Georgia Tech who wanted a nuclear reactor, for whatever mysterious reason, in the heart of Atlanta. His nonanswer was a clear-eyed Good Ole Boy's "showing 'um" to the city slickers, followed immediately with his famous smile.

Like all the other Good Ole Boys the national media found so relentlessly charming in the late Sixties and early Seventies, these Southern Democrats, once elected to office, wreaked havoc with their smiles. Deprived of the race issue by their own epiphanies to their fellow black Good Ole Boys, they could no longer shout "nigger" in the face of complaints that their administrations, like previous ones, were accomplishing nothing. In the face of opposition they learned to smile.

The vocabulary of the New South is its Good Ole Boys' vernacular for the changes they claim to have made. And it is not easy to penetrate their inscrutable colloquialisms, their acceptance at face value of any appreciation they receive, their refusal to listen to criticism. Guided by their belief that they represent the "Good South," they cling tenaciously to that image of righteousness. But it is their custom, with their smiles, to give the impression that they will go along with anything, and then employ a selective memory when it's convenient to forget a promise.

Because the nation as a whole continues to understand the South as one undifferentiated region, George Wallace's Presidential campaigns of 1964, 1968, and 1972 paved the way for a respectable Southern Good Ole Boy to go rational. While there is undoubtedly racism in a country that would vote

for a man generations have, automatically associated with racial prejudice, the smile of a Good Ole Boy like Jimmy Carter makes a vote for him respectable.

The politics of "showing 'um" has never demanded that an elected official answer directly to his constituency. Its fulcrum has always been irrationality, whether vulgar or smug. Taken now to its logical, national implications, the politics of spite in which Carter has been steeped by accident of birth and geography will compel him to make curious moves, if he is elected President. He will not have time in the four years to which the country will limit him to restore the federal court system to its Warren era dimensions, but he will conscientiously try to put a liberal Southerner on the Supreme Court and probably succeed. Trained for years to accept the superficial image of the "right thing to do" and, well aware that urban Atlanta has competent black elected leadership, he will put black leaders in power in other urban centers, without questioning their political traditions, corrupt or honest. As a Good Ole Boy he will profess not

to understand the intricacies of the federal bureaucracy, but he will regard the bureaucracy as vague and sinister and his insensitivity to it will be matched only by his enthusiasm for every scheme for the public good put to him by a fellow Christian. Carter will have an entire region behind him, unquestioning, at each moment in his four-year term.

"We've been calling for the election of a Southerner to the Presidency for 100 years and now it looks like we'll have a chance," said Jim Oakley, publisher of the *Centerville Press*, a small-town Alabama weekly, in his endorsement of Carter. Oakley gave no further details, no mention of a particular Carter program the paper found exciting, only the blind, issueless faith the South has entrusted in one Southern Democrat after another. To them, as to Carter himself, it was enough that he was a respectable Southerner. As the paper put it, "at least he is a practicing Christian." Carter's election could be the last stage in "showing 'um," an apotheosis of a hundred years of political solitude. □

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# THE SIXTH PRINCIPLE



An existential moment on Chicago TV

by Otto Friedrich

**T**HERE WE ALL WERE, sitting disconsolately around a bare, white table and drinking vending-machine coffee in white plastic cups in a bleak cafeteria in a bleak television studio in the bleak western outskirts of Chicago. And thinking—to the extent that we thought at all—that we must have been destined for something better than this. There we were—Charles Wendell Colson, a well-worn forty-four, pudgy, panda-like, once celebrated for his proclaimed willingness to run down his grandmother on behalf of Richard Nixon but now the author of a book proclaiming his rebirth in Christian fellowship; Desi Arnaz, richly white-haired and richly animated, even at the age of sixty, by an air of surprise at the strange events that can befall a man whose original claim to attention was the introduction of the conga; Colson and Arnaz and me. Having had the temerity to write a book, entitled *Going Crazy*, I was here, like my fellow authors, to perform on a television show called *Cromie's Circle*.

"We were on the same show in Washington," I remarked.

"Oh, were we?" Colson said. "Which one was that?"

"But different segments," I added. "You were leaving just as I came."

It was the same here, each of us taking his turn under the floodlights. And since I was also scheduled to do a radio show in these same studios, Professor Bernstein suddenly ap-

peared in the cafeteria to lead me away from the coffee-table celebrities and off to one of those muted tombs where radio interviews take place. Harry Bernstein (whose name I have changed slightly) was very impressive, a tall man in gray tweeds, with graying and immaculately coiffed hair. He informally introduced himself as Harry, but he quickly added, as though to assure me of his serious intentions, that he was a professor of social psychology. He told me, while the microphones in the empty chamber were being adjusted to the satisfaction of unseen technicians in a nearby control room, that he had heard a number of my television performances in Chicago, that most of the interviewers had gone astray by treating me as though I were a psychiatrist, but that he, Professor Bernstein, proposed to interview me about the existential aspects of my book.

Existential! Name me a writer who, on being charged with having written an existential work, putting him in a class with Camus—Heidegger—Husserl—doesn't begin to glow with vanity. Professor Bernstein's questions were long and weighty—his manner seemed modeled on that of William F. Buckley—and I answered in kind, existentially. It is not my intention here to recapitulate our dialogue—I have blanked most of it out of my memory, although I know that a tape probably survives in some

*Otto Friedrich is currently writing Clover, a biography of Mrs. Henry Adams.*

Chicago storeroom—but only to explain how I found myself expounding the six principles of life. Professor Bernstein asked me, toward the end of the program, why I had written only about breakdown and disintegration without ever defining the ideal standards that might break down.

"Well, that was never my purpose," I said, "but since you ask—" Any sensible defense lawyer usually warns his witness not to answer anything except what he is asked; the instructions at a television studio are just the opposite—keep talking, seize any cue, beware of the broadcaster's darkest nemesis: silence. "When my oldest daughters were adolescents," I heard myself rattling on, "I used to worry about how to teach them the difference between right and wrong. I hated the popular idea that everything is relative, or that everybody can create his own rules. There must be certain principles for defining and organizing the good things in life, the things worth doing. And I finally figured it out. There were exactly six principles that could be applied in all cases, to politics or religion or art or anything."

Professor Bernstein suddenly looked less existential. He looked simply like a radio interviewer wondering whether his show may be going out of control.

"I see," he said.

There is, of course, a certain inexorability about even the most



ephemeral radio interview in the Chicago night. Having foolhardily proclaimed my discovery of six principles by which all the values of life could be organized, I could only blunder on.

"The first one is loving. Then caring for, or taking care of, which can apply to children or rose bushes or even an old violin. Then third comes creating, making things. Fourth is learning, or simply knowing. And fifth—and fifth—"

**A**S I GET OLDER, my memory gets worse and worse. More than ten years have passed since I gave up trying to memorize Schumann's *Carnaval*, and now I often find myself unable to recall the names of movie stars, or even old enemies. In the sepulchral silence of the radio studio, I looked helplessly at Professor Bernstein and saw him looking helplessly back at me, not with any malicious desire to see me make a fool of myself but simply with the bemused stoicism of a passenger in a skidding car. He opened his mouth as though to try rescuing his program, then shut it again. The paralyzing silence lengthened.

"I just can't remember the rest," I finally blurted out. "I'm sorry, but I just can't remember."

"It's an interesting idea," said Professor Bernstein.

"There always seem to be one or two that escape me," I pressed on, still fighting to remember. Nothing came.

"Well, thank you, Otto Friedrich," Professor Bernstein hastened to cut me off. It had been rather like a calenza that had gone on too long, nodulating through remote sonorities of D sharp or A flat minor, and now the conductor could only sigh with relief as he reached the end of the performance. And at the end, the soloist is always apprehensive.

"Was that too much?" I asked.

"No, it was—uh—rather different—rather free form."

A door suddenly opened behind me, and a young woman came in.

"Humor and compassion and the setting of goals," she said.

"What?"

"Those are the other principles," he said.

I looked at her uncomprehending-

ly for a moment. She was a handsome brunette in her twenties, the producer of this interview program, and she held up a scrap of paper on which, while listening in the control room, she had scribbled some of the missing principles toward which I had been stumbling.

"No," I rejected her offering. "Humor isn't one of them, but *enjoying* is one of the ones I forgot—enjoying things, good food or whatever. But those others—they aren't really principles."

She shrugged, turned away. The interview was over anyway, and it was time to find one's way to the main studio where the Cromie show was being televised. Chuck Colson and Desi Arnaz had already come and gone, and now the spotlights shone on a beefy figure in an expensive gray suit. He had a low, primitive forehead and a beaklike nose. Gen. William C. Westmoreland, author of *A Soldier Reports*, was explaining how he might have won the war in Vietnam. The segment abruptly ended, and a different set of lights came on. Westmoreland autographed his book for Cromie and then wandered uncertainly toward the exit.

When he reached me, he held out a thick hand—he had, after all, been running for the Senate lately—and introduced himself. I gave my name and nothing more.

"And what is your line of expertise?" General Westmoreland asked.

What is one to say when one meets the enemy face to face and he tries to be friendly? Doesn't even know he is the enemy? Thinks (though he would use other terms) that we are all simply a wandering troupe of confidence men, exhibiting our wares to a gullible public?

"I'm a writer," I said, rather curtly. General Westmoreland seemed to wince, then gave an existential smile and moved on.

I was pleasant and innocuous on the Cromie show, and by the time I returned to my hotel it was after ten. The simplest way to have supper, I decided, was to try the hotel's basement restaurant, which was called Zelda. Poor Zelda, who yearned so desperately to achieve an artistic identity of her own, by writing, by painting, by dancing—"You are a third-rate writer and a third-rate ballet dancer," Fitzgerald told her—what might she have thought on see-

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### THE SIXTH PRINCIPLE

ing her name over the door of this subterranean bistro? The owners had designed it to look vaguely like some beach club at Antibes. There were white tables and wire chairs and potted palms, and framed reviews of Fitzgerald's books on the windowless walls. The premise for such a setting was not, of course, Zelda's recurrent breakdowns and death in a madhouse, but rather the supposedly carefree life of the Twenties. A hidden loudspeaker was playing "Alexander's Ragtime Band." Despite all of the owners' efforts, however, the restaurant was utterly deserted.

I ordered a bowl of onion soup and tried to force myself to remember my six principles. Free from the pressures of the radio studio, I thought, it should be simply a matter of concentration. Easier than Schumann's *Carnaval*. Loving, caring for, and enjoying—those all returned easily enough. And learning. And creating. And—and what? Compassion? Courage? No, those were qualities of character, not principles by which one could judge one's own actions.

In the empty restaurant, the background music relentlessly insisted on the joys of the Twenties: "Betty Coed" and "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby," and "I Can't Give You Anything But Love." To the young waitress, who had been outfitted in the blue blazer and white slacks of some 1920s yacht club, these songs being chanted by a falsetto tenor must have seemed not nostalgic but primeval and bizarre. I asked her, as she brought my coffee, what she thought of the music.

"Oh, after a while, you get used to it," she said amiably.

"How long does the tape go on?" I asked.

"Two hours."

"And then what?"

"Then it starts over again, and you just have to grit your teeth."

She took my ten-dollar bill and sauntered off toward the distant cash register, a pretty girl, cheerful, unconcerned with my six principles. But what could they be? What were the rules I had once devised to govern the behavior of Chuck Colson and Desi Arnaz and William Westmoreland and this waitress? I took a tattered envelope from my jacket pocket and began to write them down. Loving, creating, enjoying, taking care of, learning—and then what? □



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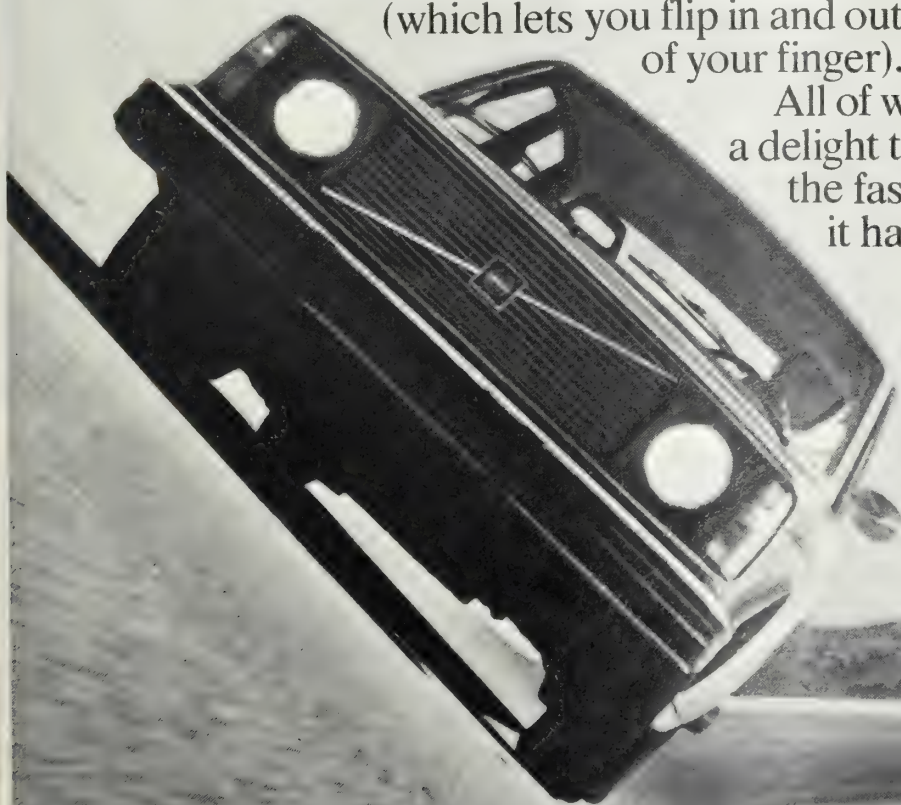
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## SILENCE IN PRAGUE

A conversation with many unspoken words

by Philip Carey

*The following story, written by an American journalist, is based on fact. Details have been changed in order to protect the identities of the persons involved.*

**I**T WAS AS A TOURIST, not a journalist, that I traveled to Czechoslovakia, and it was more or less by accident that I encountered two Czech artists. An American friend, married to a Czech, living in London, had invited me to phone his mother-in-law in Prague in case my indefinite itinerary placed me in Prague when he was there. The way we actually met gave me an odd feeling that fortune had an agenda for me. On my first morning in Prague, aware that the authorities might listen to telephone conversations originating from the hotel, I went to look for a public phone in the street. Before I'd walked five blocks, I became absorbed in the stunning architecture of the city. In Prague it is not the details of architectural style, rich though they are, that impress one at first, but rather the way the narrow streets lead the pedestrian out from tight enclosed spaces to panoramic views of the city. Prague is a city of labyrinths and profiles with irresistible appeal to the stroller. The most striking views are from the banks of the Vltava toward the borough of Hradcany,

which overlooks the river from a high ridge, dominated by Hradcany Castle, the home of Czech kings since the twelfth century. Karl's Bridge, a broad footbridge which spans the Vltava just beneath Hradcany, is the centerpiece of Prague. It is lined with statues, one every twenty paces, depicting fragments of Czech history.

**O**N KARL'S BRIDGE I was approached by a black-market money-changer. His style was so smooth that it took a moment for me to realize what he was up to. Money-changing in Czechoslovakia is illegal for private citizens, but a common venial crime among middle-class Czechs. Tourists can realize twice the bank rate in the street and only the most naive, puritanical, and timid fail to do so. Suddenly I became aware of someone at my elbow, and, turning apprehensively, I was startled to recognize my American friend from London. I confess that, if I read about it in a short story, I would call this coincidental meeting a melodramatic device worthy of a B-movie. Nonetheless, when such dramatic things actually happen, we are thrilled and impressed. The sheer excitement of it all at first kept me from noticing a tallish woman hanging back, looking on. When I did become aware

of her, my friend quickly introduced us.

"This is Daniela Capek, an old friend I knew in Paris," he said. "Come join us for lunch."

Despite the pleasure of renewing an old friendship, I was fascinated with Daniela. She speaks stiff but grammatically correct English with a heavy accent. Her hoarse, breathy voice adds to her abundant charm and her figure does not betray her age, which, she told me later, is forty-five. A textile designer by profession, she has been a painter since early adolescence. Whether she is talking or listening, her hands are never still, folding and unfolding the napkins, drawing imaginary schematics of her argument on the breadboard. Dark paint colors the lines and creases of her fingers. There is about her the faint odor of cologne and turpentine.

The luncheon conversation was lively, but we did not talk politics. When I mentioned that I had once met the Russian-born American painter Jules Olitski, Daniela's eyes blazed for a moment, then quickly she excused herself. Moments later she returned. "I just telephoned Jan, my husband," she reported. "He's at home and would like very much to meet you. We can go there now. Won't you come? Both of you."

My American friend declined the



invitation with apologies. Feeling as though I was acting out a foreordained role, I accepted with enthusiasm, and went with Daniela to her flat in Mala Strana (Little Town), the most picturesque section of Prague. We took the elevator to the top floor three flights up. As the matchbox wooden car lifted us up the stairwell, Daniela remarked in a lightly sour tone that having a functioning elevator set the building apart as a smart place to live. We were met at the door by a small man with delicate features whom Daniela introduced as Jan.

"He does not speak just now, but he will," she said.

Jan was silent but not at all retiring. His eyes flashed a greeting as he shook my hand with a solid grip. Daniela directed me down the hall into the living room, where a bottle of wine stood waiting. Along the way I took in the apartment and came to the conclusion that Jan and Daniela lived in modest but not lavish comfort.

"Jan and I are both very partial to paintings by Olitski," Daniela began. "I saw an exhibition of them in New York five years ago, when I visited the States to see my brother, and Jan saw more or less the same paintings in London two years ago. We were allowed to travel, but not together. The authorities require that we leave each other and the children behind as hostages. How did you meet Olitski?"

"It was only a casual meeting," I said apologetically. "We had a mutual friend." She did not seem disappointed and pressed for my opinion of Olitski and other American artists with whose work she was familiar. She spoke very quickly and threw bits of Czech translation at Jan, without ever taking her attention from me. On one point which she translated, Jan shook his head and clucked loudly. She shrugged her shoulders and he gave me a wry grin and a philosophic look. I began a more careful inspection of him. He was wearing corduroy trousers thinning at the knees and a faded, open-necked velour pullover. He sat in complete repose, rarely changing his posture. His composure was impressive, his look intelligent, his hands poised. The only sign of impatience was his toes wiggling in the open ends of his webbed leather sandals.

**W**E WENT TO SEE an American film last night," said Daniela, "*Last Train from Gun Hill*, a 1950s Western with Kirk Douglas and Anthony Quinn. The theater was jammed and the audience loved the film. It was painfully melodramatic—you know, good against evil. Czech audiences are very sophisticated, but still we love such rot."

"Czech films are among the best the world over," I replied. "What is the appeal of films like *Gun Hill*?"

"Perhaps we like them for their sense of justice—the white hats always vanquish the black hats. Besides, they provide comic relief, and now that Czech cinema is dead we need such films more than ever. Since the events of '68, there are no longer any filmmakers of merit in the country. It is much more serious than simply losing the best, Forman, Passer, and Kadar, whose emigration to the United States is well known. A whole generation is gone."

I was relieved that she had raised the subject of politics. It was bound to color the conversation and yet I felt reluctant to take the initiative

of bringing it into the open.

"Is this situation peculiar to cinema, or is there a similar depletion in the other arts?" I asked.

"It is the same all over," Daniela said. "Many artists, painters, writers, and musicians have left Czechoslovakia or are unable to work. Anyone associated with the reform movement which precipitated the events of '68 is denied work. If they're lucky they may find a menial job as a busboy in a restaurant or a night watchman. A friend of ours, a gifted novelist, is a bellman in a third-class hotel. Others are less fortunate and live on the generosity of their friends and relatives. Jan and I are lucky because we are not on any list."

Without warning, Jan erupted in a gush of German and French.

"We know who are the true world exporters of Fascism: the Russians. Everywhere it's the same," he said, his hands slicing the air. "Angola, Portugal, Chile—the Russians are there with guns and money. Beside them the CIA looks like the Peace Corps."

I was shocked: his sudden, angry outburst contrasted so with his calm silence. Perhaps it was naiveté on my

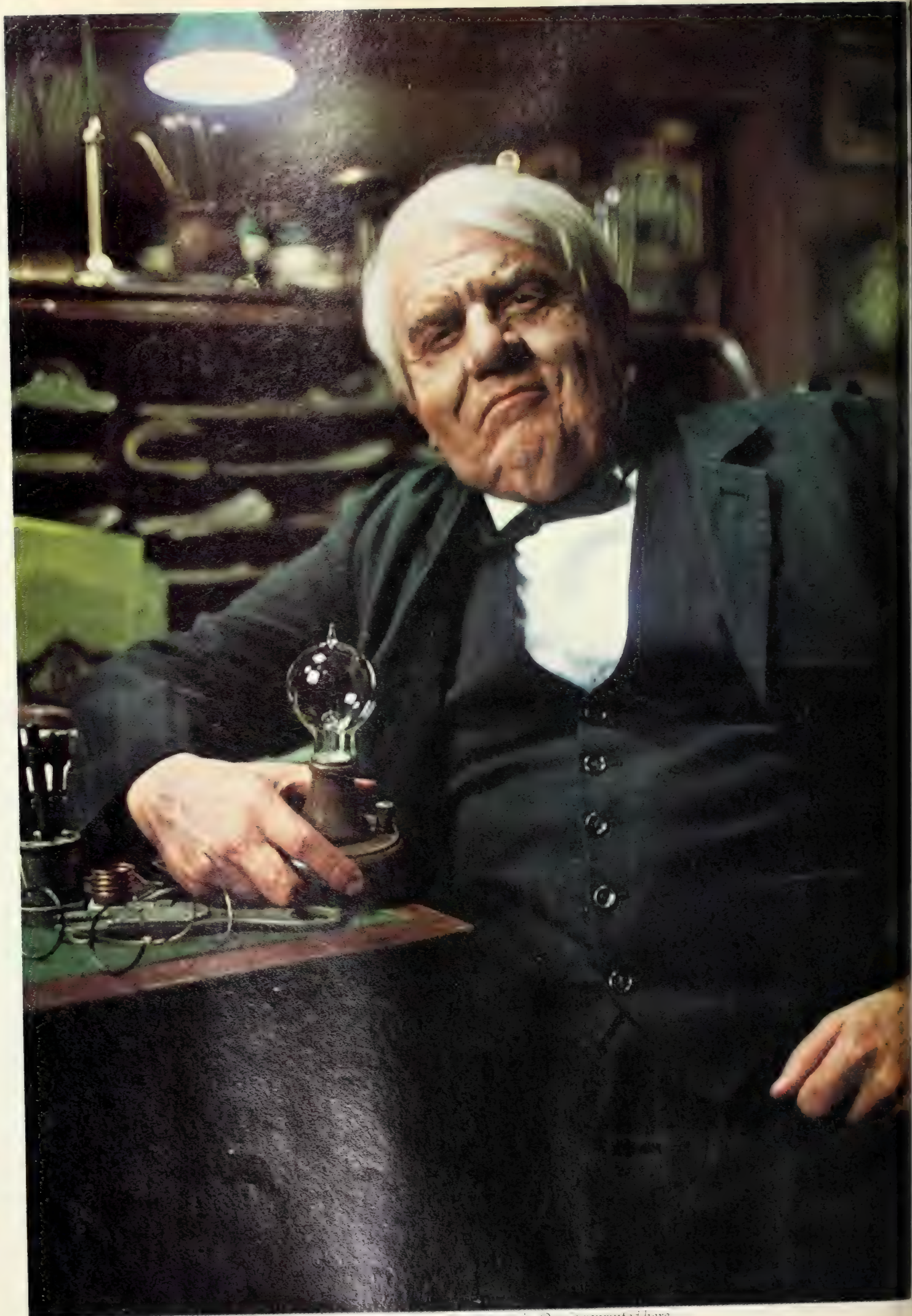
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*The company I set up to sell the light bulb was called the Edison Electric Light Company. Later, it became the General Electric Company.*

*How did I get in the whole inventing business anyway?*

*Quite frankly, I saw it as a way to make some money. When I was a newsboy, I had a chance to learn that money can be made out of a little careful thought. And, being poor, I already knew that money was a valuable thing.*

*Boys who don't know that are under a disadvantage greater than deafness."*



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part; nonetheless I was taken aback by his impression of my own country's intelligence service. I asked about the Russian presence today, a puzzle to me since there are no Russian soldiers to be seen in the streets of Prague. Daniela answered in cool tones. While she spoke, Jan's composure returned almost as quickly as it had vanished.

"They are still here, 50,000 of them. They haven't left. They're strategically positioned in the countryside, ready to strike. When we go driving in certain places we have to detour because there is a Russian camp ahead. In '68 the other Warsaw Pact countries sent their troops here, too. I can't tell you how angry it made me to see Polish troops here in Prague. There was a popular joke at the time: 'Why is Israel the safest country to live in? Because the Israelis are surrounded by their *enemies*!'"

**S**HE SETTLED BACK in her chair as Jan poured out the remainder of the wine bottle. They both made an effort to bring some levity back to the conversation. When we were near the bottom of our glasses, Jan declared he would bring a fresh bottle from the corner shop, dismissing my suggestion, *pro forma*, that perhaps I'd intruded too long. When he returned less than ten minutes later, we ceremoniously adjourned to the studio, a large room with a skylight high above. On a long workbench were piled the artifacts of a painter—partly used tubes of paint, pots full of brushes, rags, palette knives. In a corner stood a sculpture of jagged steel shafts, stacked like a bundle of wheat. It caught my eye at once.

"Do you like it?" Jan asked. "It's called *Infinite Instant*."

"What would you like to hear, classical or jazz?" he said, turning on an impressive stereo. In our new surroundings we assumed a mobile and expansive mood. Daniela brought goat cheese, and Duke Ellington played in the background. We talked of strictly personal matters—family histories, career ambitions, children, travel, and so on. A picture of their life together emerged gradually. It was an enviable picture, which they gave modestly and not self-servingly. By the standards

of Eastern Europe they live an extremely comfortable life. Both of them work as graphic designers; they have a spacious, comfortable apartment with an adequate working space; they own an automobile, and they have a summer home in the countryside.

The cheese and the third bottle of wine were gone. How long had I been a guest there? Two hours? Three? I could not tell. I don't wear a watch, and the circumstance of coming to visit on a sudden impulsive invitation left me on uncertain ground. We were strangers, albeit on intimate terms, and thinking it presumptuous not to begin taking my leave I thanked them for their kindness.

"You're not leaving," said Jan. "I'm just going to bring something more to eat and drink. Please. Stay." Daniela joined him in reassurances, and I relaxed. When Jan returned with wine and a pail of beer, Daniela made a light meal. Jazz gave way to classical on the stereo. My eyes kept coming back to the sculpture against the far wall. It gave me an unsettled feeling—why, I could not say. Then I let out a shout when I realized that the steel blades had moved.

"It is a surprise," said Jan laughing. "There is a clockwork inside that turns very slowly. It's the only clock in the house." He brought out a copy of his catalogue, and, when I showed keen interest, he found photographs of other work. Looking at artists' work while in their company can be unnerving, especially when the artist is a stranger and your host into the bargain. Nonetheless, I genuinely liked what I saw and managed to express my appreciation.

"It's a pity you don't have some of your work to show us," hinted Jan. From my shoulder bag I brought a slide viewer and a packet of transparencies. Jan and Daniela pored over them with excitement and made many useful and appreciative comments. Daniela began bringing her canvases from a closet, propping them up against the wall until the room was lined with dozens of paintings. We talked about both aesthetics and careers. Their story was one of talented, ambitious young artists who both went to Paris in their youth, studied there with the leading artists, returned home, struggled, and eventually became known

as promising new faces. Then, abruptly, they ran onto parched earth. Daniela has been unable to exhibit since 1968; Jan's last show was in 1967. I portrayed myself as a highly mobile outsider, seeking entry at the top, unable to penetrate the thicket of obstacles and hence unable to find outlets for my work. I told them about the manuscript of a book I finished four years ago which sits on the desk of the thirty-third publisher to consider it.

"Well, at least you have always another place to bring your work," said Daniela. "Have hope. It could be worse."

I asked about their relations with the authorities.

"They are generally good. Besides our commercial work I do some editorial work for a journal, and Jan teaches a course in a small academy. Nonetheless, we are unable to exhibit. There is no reason given."

Daniela brought photographs of the opening at her last exhibition in the spring of 1968. She lingered on one which showed her struggling to uncork a champagne bottle, surrounded by a dozen or so people, looking anxiously at the bottle. Pointing to one after another of them she explained their fates. "This one, a painter, has emigrated. That one is a sculptor; he lives in Paris now. The bearded one is a playwright, now blacklisted. Beside him there, she was an actress. She's dead now; suicide. The regime eventually grants most applications for emigration after a few years harassment. I suppose it's an improvement on the old days, when they were simply stood against a wall and shot. Yet sometimes I think it matters little."

"Do you have any friends left among the artists you knew then?" I asked, afraid to know the answer.

"One or two, but we rarely meet because we only talk about the others."

Then I understood the exuberance with which they had shown me their work and the uneasiness I had felt in seeing it: both of them were denied the opportunity to exhibit their work and deprived of the fellowship of other artists, and so, through an accident of circumstance, I was cast in the dual role of surrogate public and fellow artist. I felt the futility of their situation, and nothing I might do could compensate for their



losses. To these unpleasant feelings were added two more: one, the embarrassment that came with thinking my own complaints were trifling by comparison and faintly colored by self-pity; the other, my feeling of complete temporal disorientation. The skylight above had long ago gone dark, there was not a clock in the place, save for the sculpture, and the music had ranged over centuries, from New Orleans to St. Petersburg.

Now Jan brought a large wooden chest and put the contents on the floor, piece by piece. There were huge gears, spoked wheels, drive chains, swivels, joints, machined shafts, and endless fabricated objects whose essence was utility but whose specific purpose was undecipherable.

"This is my next program of sculpture," he said holding up a gear, running the teeth across his forehead, peeking through the axle hole in the center. "For me each piece is an aesthetic problem."

"What do you see for the future?" I asked. "Will things change in Czechoslovakia?"

"Not in our lifetime," said Daniela. "The world is divided into two camps. We have our work. It is enough." With that she brought folio after folio of sketches and drawings which were studies for a new series of paintings and began to discuss the aesthetic problems they posed.

**H**OW LONG HAD I been there? Would it be unsympathetic to leave now? I asked myself. I realized that I was an instrument of catharsis, but had I played my passive part to its conclusion? A great urge to dash out filled me, held in check by a feeling that the drama might not be done. I was out of my skin while we made chitchat for what seemed an eternity. Then I struck the last raw nerve that had been waiting to be touched: I asked what the Russians had actually done to suppress the revolt in 1968. Jan, who had been leaning back against the wall in a chair, brought the chair down on all fours so hard it startled me.

"The Russians were grouped in the park just at the end of our street," he said, pointing toward the window. "Daniela and the children had gone for safety to stay with rela-

tives outside Prague. I was talking with them on the telephone when the Russians opened fire on the building. Glass was flying everywhere, I heard a bullet whiz over my head, and I dropped to the floor. Then I crawled to the corridor, climbed down the fire escape, and fled." His eyes were alive as he recreated the action that had taken place eight years before. He disappeared momentarily into a storage closet and returned carrying a rectangular piece of wood.

"This was a cabinet door before it became my favorite piece of sculpture," he said with an acid tone, an expression of mock innocence on his face. A bullet had torn a hole in the geometric center of the door/sculpture. He set it on the table with loving care. With a gesture like Charlie Chaplin's, he produced a tin can from the workbench drawer. Amused by his own gesture, he made exaggerated preparations for showing the contents of the can by spreading a clean cloth on the table and bringing a floodlight from the closet. He pried the lid off the tin and one by one drew out seven misshapen copper-jacketed bullets.

"I dug them out of the walls here. From Russia with love."

I fought to keep my composure. The strain of empathizing with these two people had exhausted me, and I thought for a moment that I would break down weeping. Daniela poured the last of the wine into my glass. The three of us searched for a cheerful way to end. Then I remembered the money-changer on Karl's Bridge.

"I changed some money on the bridge today. Something made me suspicious of the transaction. Can you tell me if these are okay?" I said, taking two 1,000-koruna notes from my pocket. "I paid \$100 for them."

Jan winced, then chuckled.

"You've been swindled. The largest bill in circulation now is 500 koruna. These are from the regime before the War."

"I think I've bought an expensive souvenir," I said, laughing loudly. They joined me in a last toast, and I took my leave.

When I reached the street, I discovered a light snow had fallen. At last I found the time on a clock in Wenceslaus Square: nearly midnight. □



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Photographs by Robert Wirth

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# LETTER FROM EXILE



Most of the time it rains

by Chandler Brossard

**L**ANGUAGE, LIKE A restless lover, can deceive. Words which your desperate needs have caressed into love nests suddenly become iron maidens. Not only that. Certain "classy" words can turn you into a poseur, lull you into acting out their implied elegance. Take the word *exile*. Who can deny its *quality*, its *chic* agony? "Exiles" live in small, excellent hotels in Lisbon, or in restored windmills in Provence. They wear soft shetland jackets and suede shoes. They smile with superior sadness and order another bottle of Gevrey-Chambertin. They are so . . . *literary*. Two tables away, Kafka aimlessly rolls bread balls, or Kierkegaard plots obscure punishments for himself.

Mmm. What a delicious condition.

But the word, tiring of the charade, abruptly reveals its true self. "Exile" now becomes "fugitive." *That* is what you are, *that* is the state in which you live, today, now, and perhaps forever. You had better get to know that word and its existential geography. It has no exquisite antecedents or ancestors. It is almost lower class, and it could wear thin cotton pants. It is always on the run: no matter how long it may tarry in a particular place. It looks at gardens, to be sure, but always from the outside. Don't maintain anything to the contrary. Kidding yourself can be fatal. And that roller of bread balls . . . it is only a Spaniard who is on his way to work in a German factory.

*Chandler Brossard is the author of the forthcoming Raging Joys, Sulfuric Violations.*

And those faces across the way belong to Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, not Scott and Zelda.

There are many more words we must look into, or behind, now that we are involved, finally, in the nitty-gritty of self-confrontation. (In *this* theater we are holding hands with Brecht, not Pinero.)

For example . . . "We have a flat in London, in a Georgian house in Bayswater." That picture lies. We are sitting on the cold periphery of a societal disaster. People in the streets and in the stores talk to us in that intimate language of shared anger, as though, like them, we are trapped participants in this bleak national tragedy. But we are not. We are spectators in flight, figuring out where we will go from here. We have our own disaster. It resides in our never completely unpacked luggage.

People who come to dinner at flats in Georgian houses, the semantic myth goes, come to *dinner parties* within a stable and enviable social ambiance. Their "frames of reference," claims the simulation, are the same as ours. Not so with us fugitives. We will never be part of their ambiance or lives. Established social groups, by their very nature, and especially in a foreign country, will not absorb fugitives. To do so would be like accepting an inexplicable foreign currency. It will confuse and contaminate your own and will sabotage the smallest and most innocent of transactions. So, with infinite guile, we all of us erect a third terrain, indigenous neither to us nor to them, a

fraudulent no-man's-land, upon whose plastic greensward we gambol, flinging about us all manner of signs and symbols and tallyhos. It all vanishes, of course, with the closing of the door and the fond farewells and invitations.

"We spent a day in the country." Actually going there is tautological. That statement, by now, is prepackaged, self-sustaining. Romantic imagist deceptions provide you with both the stage, the play, and the actors. Gothic steeples, eighteenth-century inns, succulent farm landscapes kindly, amusing natives. . . . What wormy realities, what simpler, truer words hide there for the fugitive? This is more like it: the boredom and emptiness of being in the city got to be too much—you can't wrap a quaint London street around your shoulders no matter how hard you try—so we drove fifty miles south to a farm town called Barstow. We ate some funky stuff called shepherd's pie, then we wandered around trying to connect with some "charm." We felt like advance men for a colonizing project. The trip back through the Kentish countryside didn't work either. We kept wishing we were in Italy. And the local people we looked at, the "natives," they were on to us. They knew our secret and what we were trying to do. No dice.

Each of us, without telling the other, was more than happy to get back to the conspiratorial warmth of our apartment. Each such voyage out really brings the fugitive closer to himself. His existential contours are



more exactly etched. Self-portraiture is so often performed by others' hands. "A day in the country . . ." Indeed. Another day of fleeing is more like it.

**T**HERE IS A PARTICULARLY alluring and poetic set of words which one has embraced like a demented Don Juan: "Putting our roots down." How cleverly, how coquettishly *organic* this phrase is. To fling oneself into its outstretched arms is to be validated by Mother Nature herself, to say nothing of Walt Whitman, Millet, Breughel, Moses, and other such terra firma maniacs. How beatific the scene. "Putting your roots down"—in France, Italy, Wales, anywhere juicy—grinning cosmically, becoming part of the landscape, the culture, the village scene, pitching in with the spring harvest because you are *such an integral part of the place*. Those roots of yours having slurped all the way to the first tribal hoedown. Nonsense. Those so-called roots went down exactly three inches, and that's where they stayed. Just enough to hold on, not enough for anything else. Nourishment is not for the fugitive, nor is growth. Nonetheless, countless Americans all over Europe, harming "exiles" to one another, play the delusive game of "settling down."

The fugitive state of mind has its own physical law. What is a stable landscape for others is a moving one for you. For in your eternal flight you are always traveling *through* places (though you may tell yourself you are going *to* a place, as if there were going to be a substantive negotiation between you and it, a mutually beneficial exchange of selves). It's as though you spent all your time in a cruising automobile or train. Even your dreams, which one always assumed had a berserk autonomy, safe from the drear of daily life, even these seem to be shot by someone running down a street.

Metamorphosing is another talent peculiar to this mode of existence. Because you have passed through so many places, a menu in Italian becomes one in French or Spanish. A meal in Amsterdam becomes that dream in Yugoslavia where you had an afternoon dip. A smiling face in a Bavarian movie house turns into

the youthful grin of a Swiss border guard. But that's okay. You've become totally acclimated to these phenomena. Does the stylite complain of cramps? The oracle of laryngitis?

In point of fact, the fugitive is somewhat fearful of fixity. When things stop moving he thinks something's gone wrong.

Clothes . . . . How does the hardcore fugitive dress? Light, that's how. He has to laugh when he hears those genteel and misleading words "wardrobe," "clothes for the occasion," "summer outfit," "It looks so well on you." The sociological implications, and assumptions, of such language falsify his stripped (one might even say his outsider's) reality. Those words presume an engagement in the mores of a recognized and ongoing social matrix. They presume that the subject inhabits the sentiment of sociality, that self-referent world where people are "somewhere"—the name of the game—with its rules and rewards and subtle obligations. Not he. His clothes—his "stuff," really, to get it straight—are flight clothes, and they can be put into one bag. They are simple and durable and, as they have no social roles to play, no commitments in the politics of costume, they require little care. No foulard ties, no jackets that need cleaning, no flannels that need pressing, no shirts that need ironing. Like an animal's pelt, his "stuff" takes care of itself.

And what of those *connection* words, so ecstatically cherished by memory freaks like Proust whose present, in Mimesis's haute cuisine, is forever being marinated for yesterday's gluttony. Those words like "nostalgia," "Don't you miss America?" "Whatever became of so-and-so?" "Doesn't this remind you of . . . ?" They, too, falsify. They must be exposed. Those soft, gentle words imply a living relationship with a past. The fugitive has none. They suggest, they *urge*, that part of him exists *back there*. Not true. Our subject has no past. (He does not look back; he looks over his shoulder. There is quite a difference.) And he has no future. He is endlessly in transit, close in kind to those satellites eternally circling the world in the cold emptiness of outer space. Nostalgia is a "delicate" word, pulsating with woozy promises. It would go nuts up there. □

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# THE HIGHER ILLITERACY

On the prejudice against teaching college students to write

by Gene Lyons

THE IDEA OF A "literacy crisis" fits so conveniently the current mood of cultural reaction that one inclines to doubt its validity. Contemporary students, we are told, display a growing inability to read and write the English language. College freshmen now read at what used to be considered the junior-high-school level; they write in fragments and cannot think at all. It is hard not to suspect hyperbole and to conclude that if we just wait a while this latest threat to civilized values, existing only in the metaphysical netherworld of the weekly newsmagazine feature, shall also pass.

But even those of us who would prefer to disregard the coming of a plague of semi-literacy must find the evidence persuasive. Consider, for example, the steady drop in the average national score on the verbal section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test; the fact that nearly half of the entering class at the University of California at Berkeley, a fairly selective school which takes only the top eighth of California high-school graduates, failed placement exams and had to be enrolled in remedial composition courses; the news that applicants to journalism programs at Wisconsin, Minnesota, Texas, and North Carolina flunk basic spelling, punctuation, and usage tests at rates that vary between 40 and 50 percent; a survey by the Association of American Publishers showing that college freshmen *really do* read on what used to be considered a high-school freshman level.

"The great majority of American high-school pupils," wrote H.L. Mencken in 1926, "when they put their thoughts on paper, produce only a mass of confused and puerile nonsense. . . . They express themselves so clumsily that it is often quite impossible to understand them at all." Similar evaluations of the graceless muck churned out by the average student have been frequent ever since. The principal difference now, one might say, is that inarticulateness seems to be, in sociological terms, "upwardly mobile." No one expects very much more than gibberish from high-school students these days; it is the colleges, the universities, and even the graduate schools that make the loudest moan. Bearing in mind the usual qualifications about the reliability and consistency of the SAT, the changing admissions standards, and other variables, it still appears that the language is in trouble.

## Art for art's sake

ONE THING THAT IS going on is business as usual in American higher education. Mencken, at least, was consistent. He blamed bad writing on bad thinking and bad thinking on faulty genes. Only a tiny minority of the human race, he thought, was fit to be educated. Of the rest, he said that "trying to teach them to think is as vain an enterprise as trying to teach a streptococcus the principles of Amer-



George Gardner

*Gene Lyons has taught English at state universities in Massachusetts, Arkansas, and Texas, and has contributed articles to many publications, among them the New York Times Book Review, the New York Review of Books, Texas Monthly, and Harper's Bookletter.*



Gene Lyons  
THE HIGHER  
ILLITERACY

icanism." But although our schools, colleges, and universities are theoretically dedicated to the notion that Mencken was wrong, in practice they are agreeing with him. American students are not learning to write because nobody bothers to teach them how.

Teaching individual students to read, write, and think is surely not what the American university is about. Like many other bureaucracies our universities have become in large measure ingrown, so self-contained that most of their faculties believe, without ever pausing to think about it, that what is good for them is good for the culture at large. In English departments, where one would expect a concern for literacy to be located, the attitude of self-interest appears to be all but universal. Far from resisting the general dissolution, English professors as a group pay almost no attention at all to such mundane topics as literate writing. If they have the misfortune to get stuck in a school that forces them to teach that horror beyond contemplation, freshman composition, they teach it against their will.

The business of the American English department is not the teaching of literacy; it is the worship of literature. After eight years' experience as a student and seven more as a faculty member at five state universities, I am every day more astonished by the increasing distance between most English departments and the everyday concerns of the society that pays their bills. So accustomed have they become to thinking of themselves as the very vanguard, if not the salvation, of Western culture, that the average member of "The Profession," as it likes to call itself, believes that society exists to serve literary scholarship rather than the other way around. Consider the answer to the question "Why study English?" in a 1959 pamphlet distributed under the auspices of the Modern Language Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and the American Studies Association, three groups which comprise virtually the entire academic literary Establishment:

*[The] literary part of our cultural heritage is rich in the past and alive in the present. Ignorance of it would leave one a barbarian, in the sense that he would have no real connection with the culture of the past which produced him, or with the deep and significant currents of feeling and thought in his own time.*

With so lofty an ideal it is no wonder that the profession of teaching English has developed a rhetoric of transcendence very nearly resembling that of a priestly sect. Like all academics, English teachers have no objec-

tive standards for measuring books or each other. So it has been but a logical progression from an infatuation with the Joycean religion of art to the existence of an elaborate hierarchy that devotes most of its time to the intricacies of caste. The miseducation of the majority of American students thus confirms the academy in its monasticism. If the barbarians are at the walls, then the last thing the monk is about to do is take up his prayer book and reason with them. What he must do is see about protecting the holy texts.

This is particularly true in the higher reaches of the profession, in those universities with graduate programs. The survey *College Composition and Communication* (published in 1974 by the National Council of Teachers of English) showed that, among four-year state colleges with an enrollment of more than 9,000, the percentage using regular full-time faculty members to teach freshman composition was 7 percent; for state schools of more than 14,000 students the figure was 4 percent. At least one, and frequently two, semesters of composition are generally required of nearly all entering freshmen in such institutions. Figures are less dramatic for other kinds of colleges because the survey does not provide a breakdown for private institutions. But, in general, if a university, public or private, has a graduate program in English, a freshman student will be very unlikely to be taught by a full-time member of the English department. Indeed, unless he or she becomes an English major or takes junior- or senior-level electives, which a sharply declining number are doing these days, the likelihood that the student will ever see a regular member of the English department inside a classroom is quite low. Remember, too, that this is the kind of school in which virtually all of the teachers at other colleges get their training and presumably form their professional values.

**B**EFORE PROCEEDING further, I should offer a modest disclaimer. What I am saying applies in varying degree to every academic discipline that I know anything about, particularly those in the humanities, arts, and social sciences. Only the metaphors of self-justification vary. "English" merely states them in their purest form. The subject at hand is literacy, for which English departments presumably bear direct responsibility, and the profession has assumed the status of a small industry in this country. In 1970-71, the most recent academic year for which figures are available, more than 20 percent of all public



secondary-school teachers and roughly 15 percent of all college faculty members were English teachers. Because of the composition requirement, the English department is usually far and away the largest academic unit on any given campus. (Quite a political factor when it comes to changing things from within, incidentally.) But in its failure, even its refusal, to concern itself with the fundamental needs of its students it is far from unique.

Exactly why persons will fight like proverbial Turks to be allowed to teach *Moby Dick* or *The Dunciad* for twenty consecutive semesters is beyond my power to conceive. The teachers who do so nevertheless count themselves among the company of the elect, with the result that they look with condescension upon lowly teachers of basic writing skills. This attitude of disdain is communicated to the graduate students who teach most of the freshmen and to undergraduate English majors, who in turn carry it to the high schools, where it thrives. Except in those many school districts where they are given upward of 150

students at a time, high-school English teachers apparently have come to think of themselves as transmitters of the civilizing arts. They seldom stoop to lessons about complete sentences and coherent paragraphs. As things stand now, it is rare to find more than half-a-dozen college students out of a class of twenty-five who say that they were given regular instruction in writing in secondary school. (And that is as true, for those readers who still cherish regional prejudices, in Massachusetts as it is in Arkansas and Texas, the three states in which I have taught recently.)

The goal, the end, and ultimately the cause of all this is the practically universal demand made by American culture that every person "fulfill himself" at the "highest" level of activity that his calling offers. When it comes to the question of the relationship between what he *thinks* he is and what he *does*, the average literary academic can be as self-righteous as Henry David Thoreau. He expects, however, to be paid a good deal better, and by the rest of us. Far from being outside of, or

**"Our universities have become ingrown, so self-contained that most of their faculties believe that what is good for them is good for the culture at large."**



Stephen Collins/Photo Researchers



even in opposition to, the consumer society, such a pedagogue is in fact its ideal end product, almost its archetype. For, besides sharing the customary intellectual and class biases of the trade (e.g., that driving, say, a Pontiac station wagon is evidence of vulgar materialism, while a Volvo station wagon, which costs more, is not), what the kind of academic I am talking about consumes is *himself*. He doesn't work, in the ordinary sense of the word. He has a career.

Most persons in a healthy society need to regard their work, at some level, as a *job*, a useful social task which they agree to perform for money. Most jobs are not "fulfilling" most of the time if one views them from the perspective of the nineteenth-century romantic artist, which, it seems, is the way many academics see their work. In living the life of the artist without any art (most do not in fact do very much of the "research" they are given free time for), they are living one of the most personally and socially destructive forms of life known to middle-class man. The more perceptive students see such teachers less as dedicated practitioners of their disciplines than as persons whose good fortune it has been to convince the government or the trustees to underwrite their hobbies. And what students are learning from these teachers is that learning to write is simply not very important.

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### The academic elite

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**A**N EXAMPLE OF WHAT I MEAN can be examined in a controversy over the teaching of writing that took place at the University of Texas in the spring of 1975. Eighty-five percent of the freshman composition classes there, along with half of the sections of a required sophomore literature class, are taught by "teaching assistants." Together, the two courses make up 75 percent of the department's total enrollment, and 332 of its 452 classes. Yet, when it came time to cut the money, teaching assistants were getting \$607,096 of a departmental salary budget of \$2,237,450 and were being reimbursed at rates of \$3,200 to \$4,000 a year for half-time work. Half-time for them is two courses each semester (many carry a full-time course load as students). Full-time for a regular faculty member is three undergraduate courses. Yet the department voted down by a heavy margin a proposal that would have required all full-time faculty members to teach one section of freshman composition *every one-and-a-half years*. A report on

the question written by a departmental committee stated:

*Not every English professor is suited to teaching Freshman Composition, just as not every English professor is suited to teaching linguistics. Doing a competent job in FC requires two skills: the ability to teach composition, and the ability to reach freshmen. Some of us have one skill but not the other; some of us have neither skill and openly acknowledge the fact.*

The report goes on to say that students would be made unhappy and the life of the director of composition difficult by teachers who were forced to teach a course they disliked. Passing over the specious equation of teaching composition (which any literate person, with some training, ought to be able to do) with teaching a specialized body of knowledge, such as linguistics, one wonders about the logic of teachers who use incompetence and unwillingness to perform a task being paid for by public funds to justify their elevation to a "higher" level of activity.

Given the order of priorities in the academic world, the sort of persons who "acknowledge" so openly that they cannot reach freshmen are in fact boasting that they are incapable of descending to the freshman level. The answer to that claim, of course, is that an English professor who could not teach composition probably could not teach anything at all. I singled out the University of Texas because the squabbling of its English department produced a document giving facts and figures very difficult to come by most of the time. Both the figures cited and the results of such a vote would most likely be similar at any parallel institution anywhere in the United States.

The simple truth is that academic ethics today, like those of journalism, are very like those of the entertainment industry. Professors are paid and otherwise rewarded less for what they *do* as teachers than for *who they are*. Who they are is in turn decided almost entirely by "publications," of which the only judges deemed competent are other members of their particular specialty. The reader will recognize this as an aged issue that has been much discussed in the past, but the tired fact remains that the scarcity of jobs for college teachers has driven the frenzy for learned books, monographs, articles, bibliographies, and "scholarly editions" ever wider and deeper into the profession. The rebelliousness that characterized the academics during the Vietnam war years was, for the most part, directed against the society at large. Many of the ju-



nior faculty who let their scholarly publications slide while indulging in political and cultural protest were very unpleasantly surprised when they were denied tenure and let go. This was particularly true of persons who entered the profession in the latter half of the Sixties. When I took my first job as an assistant professor at the University of Massachusetts in 1969, for example, one demonstrated one's competence and goodwill to the English department by spending Sunday mornings on the Amherst Town Common protesting the war. Besides politics, the only other important factor in making tenure decisions seemed to be duration; for all our collective fears of persecution, times were good in academia. Only an admitted Republican, or maybe a Jackson Democrat, should such an unlikely specimen have materialized, would have had any good reason to suspect that he would be denied a lifetime sinecure.

Then came the time of troubles. Enrollments dropped, money got tight, and administrations began to look very hard at departments in which 75 percent or more of the faculty was already tenured and no one had been "nonrenewed" within recent memory.

Except for one man who wrote a book on Alexander Pope, everyone who hired on in 1969 at the University of Massachusetts either has been fired or left on his own account. Things are pretty much the same everywhere else. Even marginal institutions of dubious repute which, as recently as five years ago, had difficulty hiring Ph.D.s now demand pedantry. Generally, a person teaching at such a place need not publish unless he gives the administration some other reason not to like him, but the fear is always there, and with it all the accompanying snobbery and posturing. For all the quibbling of the majority of literary scholars, one hears the word "brilliant," or the slightly more modest "first-rate," in the halls of an English department almost as often as variants of the verb "to hit" at a convention of football coaches.

**"The business of the American English department is not the teaching of literacy; it is the worship of literature."**

**I**F THIS BEHAVIOR prevailed among Egyptologists at private institutions, it would be of no concern to the public. But what is at issue is the transmission of literacy and literary culture within our society. And while those skills and values appear to

# MASTERS OF BABBLE

Turning language into stone

by James P. Degnan

**D**ESPITE ALL THE current fuss and bother about the extraordinary number of ordinary illiterates who overpopulate our schools, small attention has been given to another kind of illiterate, an illiterate whose plight is, in many ways, more important, because he is more influential. This illiterate may, as often is not, be a university president, but he is typically a Ph.D., a successful professor and textbook author. The person to whom I refer is the straight-A illiterate, and the following is written in an attempt to give him equal time with his widely publicized counterpart.

tempt to give him equal time with his widely publicized counterpart.

**T**HE SCENE IS MY office, and I am at work, doing what must be done if one is to assist in the cure of a disease that, over the years, I have come to call straight-A illiteracy. I am interrogating, I am cross-examining, I am prying and probing for the meaning of a student's paper. The student is a college senior with a straight-A average, an extremely bright, highly articulate student who has just been awarded a coveted fellowship to one of the nation's outstanding graduate schools. He and I have been at this, have been going over his paper sentence by sentence, word by word, for an hour. "The choice of exogenous variables in relation to multi-collinearity," I hear myself reading from his paper, "is contingent upon the derivations of certain multiple correlation coefficients." I pause to catch my breath. "Now that statement," I address the student—whom I shall call, allegorically, Mr. Bright—"that statement, Mr. Bright—what on earth does it mean?" Mr. Bright, his brow furrowed, tries mightily. Finally, with both of us combining our linguistic and imaginative re-

sources, finally, after what seems another hour, we decode it. We decide exactly what it is that Mr. Bright is trying to say, what he really *wants* to say, which is: "Supply determines demand."

Over the past decade or so, I have known many students like him, many college seniors suffering from Bright's disease. It attacks the best minds, and gradually destroys the critical faculties, making it impossible for the sufferer to detect gibberish in his own writing or in that of others. During the years of higher education it grows worse, reaching its terminal stage, typically, when its victim receives his Ph.D. Obviously, the victim of Bright's disease is no ordinary illiterate. He would never turn in a paper with misspellings or errors in punctuation; he would never use a double negative or the word *irregardless*. Nevertheless, he is illiterate, in the worst way: he is incapable of saying, in writing, simply and clearly, what he means. The ordinary illiterate—perhaps providentially protected from college and graduate school—might say: "Them people down at the shop better stock up on what our customers need, or we ain't gonna be in business long." Not our man. Taking his cue from years of higher education, years of reading the



Gene Lyons  
THE HIGHER  
ILLITERACY

many observers to be going the way of sand painting, literary academia indulges itself even more than ever in hobbyhorse "research" of a kind that used to be done primarily by potty Church of England vicars when it was too rainy for croquet. In the nine years between 1964 and the most recently available Modern Language Association bibliography (now running two years behind, because of what one might call "the footnote explosion") the number of scholarly articles and books indexed in one category, "Twentieth-Century American Literature," jumped from 778 to 1,986. In 1973 there were 457 publications on Shakespeare. Among the 133 items concerning Faulkner in the same year were two called "Community and the Country Store in *The Hamlet*" and "A Word List of Southern Farm Terms from Faulkner's *The Hamlet*." One university press published a book on Irving Wallace.

The evidence suggests that this is only a fraction of the pedantry being produced. *American Literature*, one of the more prestigious journals, reports that it accepted only 50 out of 530 submissions in 1973. *College English* took 160 out of 800, and *Publica-*

*tions of the Modern Language Association*, a stuffy periodical which, as Edmund Wilson put it, "contains for the most part unreadable articles on literary problems and discoveries of very minute or no interest," printed 52 of 526 submissions. This is what professors are doing while accepting between \$12,000 and \$35,000 a year for eight or nine months of work and refusing to teach freshmen.

What is the point of all this stuff besides advancing the careers of the people who write it? Except for a veneer of truly fine and intellectually adventurous work, it is in the main devoted to two topics: the justification of its own existence and what Frederick Crews calls "hopeful guesses about the uplifting value of literature." Although literary critics, like historians, sometimes compete for the honorable designation of being "scientific," almost no one can agree that genuine progress has been made. In the sense of generating falsifiable hypotheses which may be tested against the evidence, ordinary scholarship is about as "scientific" as the weather predictions in the *Farmer's Almanac*. Frederick Crews makes a similar point in an essay called "Anaesthetic Criticism":

textbooks and professional journals that are the major sources of his affliction, he writes: "The focus of concentration must rest upon objectives centered around the knowledge of customer areas so that a sophisticated awareness of those areas can serve as an entrepreneurial filter to screen what is relevant from what is irrelevant to future commitments." For writing such gibberish he is awarded Straight As on his papers (both samples quoted above were taken from papers that received As), and the opportunity to move, inexorably, toward his fellowship and eventual Ph.D.

As I have suggested, the major cause of such illiteracy is the stuff—the textbooks and professional journals—the straight-A illiterate is forced to read during his years of higher education. He learns to write gibberish by reading it, and by being taught to admire it as profundity. If he is majoring in sociology, he must grapple with such journals as the *American Sociological Review*, journals bulging with barbarous jargon, such as "ego-integrative action orientation" and "orientation toward improvement of the gratificational-deprivation balance of the actor" (the latter of which monstrous phrases represents, to quote Malcolm Cowley, the sociologist's way of saying "the

pleasure principle"). In such journals, Mr. Cowley reminds us, two things are never described as being "alike." They are "homologous" or "isomorphic." Nor are things simply "different." They are "allotropic." In such journals writers never "divide" anything. They "dichotomize" or "bifurcate" things.

**S**OCIOLOGY HAS LONG been notorious for producing illiterates of all kinds, but such supposedly more literate and humane disciplines as philosophy, or even English, turn them out as well. If the potential victim majors in English with an emphasis on linguistics, it will be almost impossible for him to emerge with literacy intact. He will habitually read such masters of babble as Dr. Noam Chomsky or Dr. Zellig Harris. From Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures*: "When transformational analysis is properly formulated we find that it is essentially more powerful than description in terms of phrase structure, just as the latter is essentially more powerful than description in terms of finite state Markov processes that generate sentences from left to right." Or from Dr. Harris's renowned text, *Structural Linguistics*: "Another consideration is the availability of simultaneity, in ad-

dition to successivity, as a relation among linguistic elements."

If the student's emphasis is on literary criticism, he may browse through *Prisms*, in which Dr. Albert Cook delivers himself of such major pronouncements as:

*The modern predicament (as rendered by dramatists like Beckett and Ionesco) in the abstract verbal structures of the stage, is envisioned by means of a procedure that implicitly questions those very structures, very much as the extreme literalness of film technique in certain directors (Buñuel and Antonioni) pushes the emotions, of a geometry visual rather than primarily verbal, into an abstractness that seems unliteral; into a realm where terms like "realism" and "surrealism" have been superseded and transcended.*

If he is majoring in philosophy, the potential victim might read Father Bernard Lonergan's book, the infelicitously titled, 900-page *Insight*. It begins:

*The aim of the present work may be bracketed by a series of disjunctions. In the first place, the question is not whether knowledge exists, but what precisely is its nature. Secondly, while the con-*



*The history of literary study is transparently a history of intellectual and political fashion, never more so than in recent formalism and neo-religious moralism. Critics have arrived at no agreement whatever about the meaning of beauty, the criteria of value, or even the grossest facts about books and authors, such as whether Shakespeare was or wasn't stoical, whether Milton was or wasn't of the Devil's party, whether Blake was crazy or visionary or both, whether The Golden Bowl is an example of self-transcendence or of colossal arrogance and evasion. Unless one had decided in advance to find criticism 'coherent and progressive,' he would be hard pressed to justify calling it an intellectual discipline at all.*

What is even more remarkable to the average educated person is that academic criticism rarely concerns itself with deciding the relative importance of books and writers. As Crews points out, it is impolite to favor one theoretical approach or even one author over another. Why this is so is not hard to imagine when one considers that the stakes are often lifetime employment. Professor X is completing a study of, say, Hemingway, whom Professor Y pri-

vately considers a ham-witted boasthard. But X will be voting on Y's promotion, and Y is himself engrossed in Faulkner, whom X thinks of as a dipsomaniacal obscurantist. The last one to say anything unpleasant is Z. He is doing a scholarly edition of the works of a long-forgotten poet whom all three recognize to be justifiably out of print.

An even sadder irony is that a reasonable case can be made for the proposition that pedantry and illiteracy are between them contributing as heavily as any other factors to the declining prestige of imaginative literature. Confronted as early as junior high school with the notion that reading fiction and poems is a moral exercise in the decoding of abstruse symbols and the unearthing of Deep Hidden Meanings, the majority of students these days either become fearful of literature, lest they miss too much, or grow disgusted and conclude that it is all worthless. I am often reminded in this connection of a friend who admitted to me once that when he read fiction, whether it was Bellow or Mailer or Graham Greene, it was generally for entertainment and pleasure. He was greatly relieved when I said that I thought most normal people did.

**"The teachers who count themselves among the company of the elect look with condescension upon lowly teachers of basic writing skills."**

*tent of the known cannot be disregarded, still it is to be treated only in the schematic and incomplete fashion needed to provide a discriminant or determinant of cognitive acts. Thirdly, the aim is not to set forth a list of the abstract properties of human knowledge but to assist the reader in effecting a personal appropriation of the concrete, dynamic structure immanent and recurrently operative in his own cognitional activities. Fourthly, such an appropriation can occur only gradually, and so there will be offered, not a sudden account of the whole of the structure, but a slow assembly of its elements, relations, alternatives, and implications. Fifthly, the order of the assembly is governed, not by abstract considerations of logical or metaphysical priority, but by concrete motives of pedagogical efficacy.*

such reading reduces the student's mind to gruel. His capacity to think nearly degenerates, and, with it, his capacity to write readable English.

From time to time, visionaries and radicals of various kinds have tried to do away with straight-A illiteracy. Franklin Roosevelt once hired the se-  
 anticist Stuart Chase to do this in the American Civil Service, but, obviously, little effect. The problem with stamp-

ing out illiteracy in the schools, whether it is straight-A or ordinary, is that, while the cure is simple, it could be economically disastrous for the schools and for the nation. For instance, the cure for the ordinary illiteracy that flourishes in colleges and graduate schools is simply for these institutions to stop admitting people who cannot read and write. This would mean, at the average college, a drop in enrollment of about 75 percent, and it would be calamitous, not only for the colleges, but, more important in the eyes of many, for the National Football League, which depends almost entirely on the colleges for its free system of farm clubs.

As for straight-A illiteracy, the cure is simply for the various academic disciplines to recognize and reaffirm the homely truth that the one thing they share, and *must* share if they are to communicate with one another, is a common language, the English language; a language with conventions and standards that determine whether it is being used well or badly, conventions and standards available in such civilized (but, these days, apparently unused) sources as Fowler's *Modern English Usage* and Webster's *Second New International Dictionary* (Webster's *Third*, obviously the work of

straight-A illiterates, is not to be countenanced).

To recognize the truth that writing well tends to mean writing simply, clearly, vividly, and forcefully, whether such writing is done by a philosopher or an engineer; to recognize the truth that, having nothing to say, one should refrain from using thousands of words to say it; to recognize the truth that pretentious nonsense is not profundity, is painful for many, and, as I have suggested, perhaps economically disastrous. As one of the many straight-A illiterates I have known once explained, "If I followed your advice, I could never write the 5,000-word term papers I am regularly assigned; I could never get a fellowship to graduate school, or a contract to do a textbook, or a decent job in business or government. What you're asking is just too much. Think what it would do in the universities alone. It would wipe out hundreds of courses and all of the colleges of education. And think what it would do to the economy, think of the depression it would cause in the paper and ink and business-machine industries; think what would happen in the publishing business; think of all the secretaries who would be out of work. No, I'm sorry, literacy might be okay, but I can't afford it." □



THE ROLE OF THE TEACHING assistant, who has most of the responsibility for writing courses at most large schools, is that of acolyte. That he is no longer an "assistant" at teaching the classes for which he is given sole responsibility is rarely remarked upon. Typically he has no training in teaching writing at all. How could he? Most English professors take only one course in the subject, when they are freshmen. That the terminology itself is every bit as dishonest and evasive as "protective reaction strikes" and "inoperative statements" is also unmentioned. Nor does one hear much protest against the almost universal practice of setting up dummy "research" courses that do not exist and registering teaching assistants and other graduate students into them for the purpose of falsifying faculty teaching loads and generating more funds for salaries. No doubt many teaching assistants do an excellent job, but, if so, they do it almost purely by accident. Other departments commonly complain that the composition course they want their students to take is often turned into a literature class by teaching assistants.

My point in all this has not been to say that academic politics are any lower than those of the surrounding community. As nearly as one can determine these kinds of things, they would seem to be about the same as those at Lockheed, Gulf, and the United States Congress, with the exception that academics rarely have direct opportunities for laying their hands on other people's cash. But for many years the American people have been sold the idea that quality education is their primary assurance that they and their children can get a fair share in society. For the most part it has worked; higher education, especially the public variety, has served as well as anything else as an agency of class mobility. As the first person in my family to attend, much less to teach in, a college of any kind, I am not about to turn against education. But it seems to me that the Vietnam years exacerbated the already unfortunate tendency of many academics to see themselves as apart from and superior to the rest of American culture. With the costs of education rising so dramatically, and with performance standards dropping all around them, it is time for academics to cease pretending that criticisms of *us* can only be couched in *their* (i.e. in anti-intellectual) terms. What we all share—Left and Right, businessman, plumber, artist—is an interest in seeing that persons paid out of public funds to perform a task that society wants done be held accountable for performing it. The swindling of the public interest should be seen as

objectionable no matter what the motives of the swindlers.

Experience suggests that such abuses will never be altered from within the academy without a vast change in the society as a whole. "Academic freedom" has become so identified with self-interest and the profession so dominated by its hierarchical structure that many academics have come to believe that an English department deserves the unquestioning support of the state.

Most of the things that can be done by persons outside the universities entail self-evident dangers. No one who has watched members of the average state legislature in action can feel entirely at ease about recommending that they involve themselves in the internal affairs of universities, but there are things that can be done. Funding can be cut off for useless and superfluous "scholarly" publishing ventures; laws can be passed requiring that senior faculty teach a certain number of basic courses in all disciplines; funding formulas can be altered, particularly in overcrowded fields, so that it stops being so profitable for universities to exploit underqualified graduate students as teachers in order to fatten departmental budgets. Job categories can be written that will allow faculty members to identify themselves and be evaluated primarily as *teachers*. This would have three advantages: those who chose to be scholar-teachers would have to do the work and be evaluated on its worth or give up the free time; the costs of that research would be made visible and therefore manageable; and the reduction in hypocrisy might prevent many of the best young students from leaving graduate school as soon as they understood academic politics.

A final note: I have not mentioned those persons within academia who agree with what I have been saying. The controversy at Texas, I am told, was fierce, protracted, and acrimonious. There is a subdued minority within the universities that disagrees with what I have described as the prevailing ethos. It consists of people who feel trapped, often worried that their suspicions are a sign of an inability to make the grade as scholars. Quite correctly, they worry that if they announced or acted upon their convictions, they would soon find themselves unemployed. The "higher" one goes up the academic ladder, the more likely it becomes that an interest in teaching writing courses, particularly to freshmen, will be taken as a confession of intellectual inferiority.

As long as there are books there will be pedants, most of them arrogant, but teachers accepting public money should be required to do the job for which they are paid. □



# NEWSPAPERS, WOMEN, AND BEER



The letters of H. L. Mencken

Throughout his life H.L. Mencken must have typed or dictated 100,000 letters. Most were short, on the half sheets which became his hallmark. Many were filled with what he liked to call his "malicious animal magnetism."

Mencken was at his most prolific and exuberant in the years from 1914 to 1933. He became a coeditor of the *Smart Set* magazine in 1914, at the age of thirty-four, and, in 1925, a founding editor of the *American Mercury*. The letters published here date mainly from that period. These were the years when Mencken was reaching the peak of his success, when he was, professionally and personally, happier than he would ever be again.

Even as an adolescent Mencken preferred typing to writing longhand. He started modestly with his father's old upright Remington, graduated to a tiny Corona which he pounded during his long heyday, and went on to a Rem-

ington portable noiseless which he broke in at the national political conventions of 1932. As his correspondence grew, he had to employ secretaries for the work. Since he rarely made carbons of his letters, many of those which survive were transcribed from his secretaries' notebooks. The preservation of many others (more than 8,000) was accomplished by the historian Julian Boyd, who, while librarian at Princeton, collected and microfilmed letters from Mencken's chief correspondents.

The following letters, together with their accompanying notes, have been selected and adapted from *The New Mencken Letters*, edited by Carl Bode, professor of American literature at the University of Maryland, author of a biography of Mencken, and editor of *The Young Mencken*, a compilation of Mencken's early writings. The book will be published by Dial in October.

TO ORRICK JOHNS

May 1, 1916.

Dear Johns:

I have read these poems seventy or eighty times but they still fail to give me anything even remotely approaching a thrill. My private conviction is that they are very bad, but in this I may be wrong. Why not mock me and put me to fright by sending in some superb and undoubted masterpiece?

I inclose a few things to save your soul.

Sincerely yours,

Mr. Orrick Johns.

TO THEODORE DREISER

/December 20?, 1916/

Dear Dreiser:-

Despite all your honeyed eloquence, I still think it rotten politics to come out with a play on sexual perversion at such a time. Think how the moral reviewers will fall upon it, and bellow, "I told you so." Really, the enterprise is quite insane. You are making it impossible for your lawyers to do anything. Worse, your play is a very bad one. The sexual perversion will appear to be dragged in by the heels—a mere effort to be nasty. Such strikes for liberty of discussion do not interest me. If you had anything to say on the subject, I'd be for saying it. But you actually say nothing. Cut out the scandalous interest, and there is no interest left. Fully half of the signers of the Protest, painfully seduced into signing by all sorts of artifices, will demand that their names be taken off. You fill me with ire. I damn you in every European language. You have a positive

A rejection like this was nearly as good as an acceptance, so Johns kept on sending in his verses from Missouri.

from *The New Mencken Letters* edited by Carl Bode. Copyright © 1976 by Carl Bode and The Mercantile Safe Deposit & Trust Co., trustees for the estate of H. L. Mencken. Reprinted by permission of The Dial Press.



genius for doing foolish things. Put the ms. behind the clock, and thank me and God for saving you from a mess. Also, avoid Reno as you would the great pox while the case is on. Imagine the headlines when you come to trial. In brief, apply to this business the elementary reasoning powers of a streptococcus. Don't crab it so magnificently.

As for the review, my chaplain advises me to promise nothing. For such a disease as you show the most violent remedies are indicated by the pharmacopoeia. A big dose, filling the patient to the gills—down, down she goes! St. Barnabas, what a taste! But it will do you good, my dear Mon Chair. Almost I grow moral.

Change your play into something else. Jack the Ripper is an old, old story—a shilling shocker these many years. Read it in cold blood. Take the advice of men with hair on their chests—not of women. Leave it to anyone you choose—Huneker, or Wilkinson, or Masters. This is my sober, honest judgment: The play is a piece of pish—clumsy, banal, unnatural, almost idiotic. Its publication would lose you your case, forfeit the respect of all intelligent persons, and make every man who has labored on the protest look like an ass. This I verily believe. Call me an ass an thou wilt, but you can't get around my offer to submit it to arbitration. Show this letter to Wilkinson, and then let him read the play—or vice versa.

If you pull any stuff about the morals of Baltimore, I'll have you killed within ten days.

Yours in Xt.,  
M

Don't forget that we meet on the 27th. The place: Lüchow's beer-rooms. The time: 7 p.m. Bring the fair Gloom. I sail on the 28th. Done by me, etc.

Theodore Dreiser and Mencken corresponded from 1907 until Dreiser's death, in 1945. Mencken emerged as the heartiest champion that Dreiser the author had; on the other hand, he soon decided that Dreiser had the social habits of a tomcat. Dreiser for his part deeply appreciated Mencken's battles on his behalf but also came to consider him a scold. Most of their correspondence has survived, though not all.

The play in question was *The Hand of the Potter*. Its central character, young Isidore Berchansky, rapes and then murders an eleven-year-old girl.

Huneker, or Wilkinson, or Masters: The American aesthete and essayist James Gibbons Huneker; the British novelist Louis Wilkinson, then in this country; and Edgar Lee Masters, who the year before had published *Spoon River Anthology*. They were all known for the breadth of their appreciation.

Avoid Reno: Dreiser was toying with the idea of a divorce from his infinitely patient wife.

The fair Gloom: Estelle Bloom Kubitz, nicknamed "Gloom" by her sister Marion because of her love for gloomy Russian novels, had recently become Theodore Dreiser's secretary.

I sail on the 28th: For Europe as war correspondent for the Baltimore *Sun*.

TO THEODORE DREISER

H. L. MENCKEN  
1524 HOLLINS ST  
BALTIMORE

Dec. 21, 1916.

Dear Dreiser:

Pondering my letter of last night, I become full of fears that I did not make its objections to the play strong enough. If you have any such feeling, please add 40% to every adjective and 100% to those that seem the weakest. I had rather see you sold into white slavery at once than have you print such a play at this juncture. The delight of the Comstocks would be wholly beyond expression. They would fix upon you forever the reputation of a man who dealt in the most unmentionable indecencies and your goose would be cooked. If the play must be printed, then for God's sake get Ella Wheeler Wilcox or Dr. Frank Crane to sign it. You are the one man in America to-day who cannot afford to monkey with such dangerous buzzsaws. For all you and I can say to the contrary, this is still a great moral republic, and there is plainly such a thing as tempting its pious sentiment too far. Seriously, the only feasible course is to print the play under a nom de plume and then acknowledge it after the row is over. But you will never acknowledge it. Two years hence, reading it in cold blood, you will rank it with that early book of yours which now stands suppressed but is read with gloating by occasional visitors to the Congressional Library.

I inclose you a tract appropriate to the season. The author is a very good friend of mine.

Yours,  
M

Ella Wheeler Wilcox, then sixty-six, was one of the most popular and most moralistic bad poets of her era. Dr. Frank Crane was a Methodist minister turned journalist and the author of such books as *God and Democracy*, (1911).





TO THEODORE DREISER

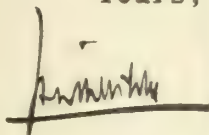
H. L. MENCKEN  
1524 HOLLINS ST  
BALTIMORE

Dec. 22, 1916.

Dear Dreiser:

I am still full of fears that I adopted a too suave and conciliatory tone in my letters about the play. Please destroy them forthwith. I shall give you my verdict through a megaphone when we meet. Whenever I take a pen in hand I immediately grow artificial and ineffective.

Yours,



Even this note was not enough. Dreiser immediately rebutted with what Mencken termed, in his long answer the day after, "Your eloquent arguments in favor of the high artistic purpose and noble intent of your play." Dreiser added—and this stung—that Mencken was a moralist.

Despite all his cutting and slashing, Mencken triumphed only temporarily. But a temporary triumph was enough at this point. It was not till 1919 that Dreiser managed to get *The Hand of the Potter* printed, and not till 1921 that he got it produced. It was a failure on both occasions.

TO F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

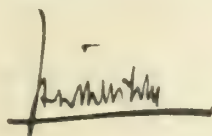
H. L. MENCKEN  
1524 HOLLINS ST  
BALTIMORE

April 3rd/1920/

Dear Mr. Fitzgerald:-

Thanks very much for "This Side of Paradise." Nathan is full of enthusiasm for it, and I shall read it at once. I note that the reviews are all very favorable. Here's hoping that Scribner's salesmen do not overlook the opportunity! Nathan tells me that you are about to be married. My very best congratulations!

Sincerely yours,



In June 1919 after collecting 122 rejection slips from all over, Fitzgerald had finally sold a story—to the *Smart Set*. It was "Babes in the Woods," and Mencken put it in the August issue. Now, less than a year later, Mencken was complimenting the author of *This Side of Paradise*, a book about to be hailed by many reviewers as the novel of the year. He added his own praise in the *Smart Set* for August 1920.

TO EDNA FERBER

September 30th /1921/

Respected Mlle.:-

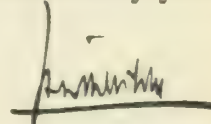
"The Girls" came in the other day, and I began to read it. Well, may I roast in hell forevermore if it ain't an A No. 1 piece of work. You have never done anything better than Chapter XII. It is capital stuff—well imagined, swift moving, humorous, and full of sound feeling. The cleverness of it gives me a genuine thrill. Every time you run into a problem you solve it perfectly—and one after the other. So with the whole book. The people in it are absolutely alive—even the flapper. The action is so probable that it seems inevitable. And if an old man may speak out boldly, I think there is constant ingenuity and brilliancy in the writing. My very sincere congratulations. I give a hoch for you. It is a pity that (on account of a threatened printers' strike) I won't get a chance at the *Smart Set* again until the January number.\* But maybe I'll bust into a newspaper before that.

As a practical work of art the thing has a defect. You have spread yourself over too many characters of the first importance. All that work, concentrated on one, would have created a personage walking visibly, even to boobs. The old gal, Carrie, was your oyster. You have done her magnificently. But Lottie falls but little below her. Moral: do a book holding rigidly to one, or maybe two, principal characters. I have an idea for you. But more of this anon.

If you can find a newspaper who wants stuff from the Disarmament Conference, don't miss it. It will be the greatest carnival of social pushers, propagandists and idiots ever seen in the world. All the Washington correspondents in their long-tailed coats will take it quite seriously. It will actually be a burlesque. I have hired myself out to visit the scene now and then.

Meanwhile, my highest respects. You have clouted out a Babe Ruth.

Sincerely yours,



\*This sounds imbecile. What I mean is that I had to do my Dec. article in advance, so that we could make up two magazines. Now the devils decide not to strike.

The charming if brash Miss Ferber had gravitated from Milwaukee to Chicago and was living there when she first wrote to Mencken in September 1920. He found her short stories and novels more than readable.

A hoch: a toast.



TO MARION BLOOM

H L MENCKEN  
1524 HOLLINS ST  
BALTIMORE

December 6th /1921/

Dear Marion:-

I now find that the last Sun tea-party will be on Thursday of this week. What do you say to going to it? If you agree I'll call for you at your house at 4.30 or thereabout. Can you be ready by that time? But don't wear any maroon velvet: the gals will all be jealous. Make up as a lady doctor of philosophy, in your new suit. H. G. Wells will be there. But if you flirt with him I'll give you a crack over the head.

Yours,  
H

Marion Bloom met Mencken early in 1914, when she went with her sister Estelle Bloom Kubitz to the *Sun* office. Estelle's husband had vanished and she visited the *Sun* on the chance of hearing news of him. Marion and Mencken were immediately drawn to one another, and were close friends until 1923, when Marion married Lou Maritzer.

Wells had come to Washington to report on the Disarmament Conference.

TO SARA HAARDT

H L MENCKEN  
1524 HOLLINS ST  
BALTIMORE

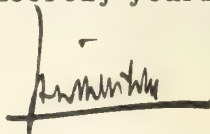
Baltimore, June 5, 1923

Dear Miss Haardt:

The poem I can't take. We have 200 or 300 bales of poetry stored in Hoboken, in the old Norddeutscher-Lloyd pier. There are 300,000 poets in America.

Meanwhile, let me see whatever you do. I think you have a good novel in your head.

Sincerely yours,



Six weeks earlier Mencken had addressed the young ladies of Prof. Harry Baker's class in magazine writing at Goucher College. Mencken had agreed to speak mainly because he and Baker had been colleagues on the *Smart Set*. After his evening's discourse, in which he remarked that writing was no trade for a lady, he was taken to a late supper by Baker. Invited to go with them were Sara Mayfield, who had just won the Freshman Short Story Contest, and her friend Sara Haardt, a young colleague of Baker's in the English department.

During the supper Mencken mentioned that he thought Miss Haardt had submitted a story to the *Smart Set* which had been rejected. Send some more things, was his hearty injunction.

TO PHILIP GOODMAN

August 3rd /1923/

Dear Phil:-

In this black and tragic hour, of course, thoughts of boozing will be repugnant to you, but in view of the fact that His Majesty limits the period of mourning to one week from yesterday I take it that you will have recovered by the end of next week. Accordingly, I suggest that you come down by the Congressional on Saturday the 11th and do me the honor of visiting my humble abode. Crabs will be on the table, mountain high, and there will be some of the best beer you ever tasted. This brew, indeed, almost makes me weep. It is the noblest, by far, ever broached in my house—a full-bodied semi-Dunkles, not too bitter and yet not too sweet, running about 5% of ethyl alcohol by volume. I shall reserve 30 bottles for you. The rest of the brethren will have to drink my usual beer. Don't say that you are busy. The girls surely must take their baths on Saturday night. In any case, they deserve one free evening. There is such a thing as rodding them excessively. If you simply can't sleep without tickling one, bring her along and park her at the Belvedere. I'll send her a bottle of that Virginia Dare wine and a copy of the Ladies' Home Journal to entertain her while you are getting soused.

Yours,  
M

Mencken enclosed a clipping which read:

"London, Aug. 3.—The following statement was issued today at Buckingham Palace.

"The king commands that the court shall wear mourning for one week for the late Hon. Warren Gamaliel Harding, President of the United States. The period of mourning shall commence from this date."

"King George sent a message of condolence to Mrs. Harding."

TO SARA HAARDT

Baltimore, October 8, 1923

Dear Miss Haardt:-

My conscience troubles me about letting a Refined Woman tote moonshine through the streets of a great Christian city. Couldn't I call for you, conceal the jugs in my baggage, and then make off with you to the wop's studio? If not, where shall we meet and when?

I spent the week-end on the Eastern Shore, along with two other Baptists, one of them a judge. The local gentry turned out Saturday night to drink us under the table, but when the smoke cleared away all save



four or five of them were dead on the field of honor. A great place for eating and drinking, but I only saw one pretty gal, she was a New Yorker. A sad scene. The native Junker can't keep up their estates, so all the best land is falling into the hands of profiteers from the North and West.

Sincerely yours,

For posterity Mencken put a note on the transcription of the letter, saying that the moonshine was some Alabama corn liquor which Sara Haardt had smuggled in for him from her home in Montgomery, where she was spending her summer vacation.

The wop's studio: Marconi's Restaurant.

Junker: gentry.

TO SARA HAARDT

Baltimore, January 30, 1925

Dear Sara:-

I have just escaped from New York. I went out to Mt. Vernon (N.Y.) by motor last night with Paul de Kruif and we came near perishing in a blizzard. But his amiable, industrious and beautiful wife had a Stokes' Liniment cocktail ready for us, and we thawed out in ten minutes. At one time I feared that the wind would blow the machine into the Harlem river. Such are the perils of life in that great city. At noon there was a vast literary lunch for Sherwood Anderson. Had I known what a jam there was to be I should have come down with the ager and got off. All the vermin of New York were there, from the young Aesthetes to Sherman. I managed to evade them all, and to get at a table which included but one Americano, and he was a parlor anarchist. I picked up four dinner invitations. Four more lies on my conscience when the time comes. Anderson showed up wearing a navy blue shirt with a soft collar and a flowing necktie to match. His tweeds, at least 3/4 of an inch thick, were yellow shot with brown. In his neckties he wore a ruby at least an inch in diameter. He has lately married a new wife, and is not yet himself. Dreiser was invited, but didn't come. The ladies ran to adiposity, but I saw 2 or 3 cuties. Probably stenographers. A dry party.

Yours,  
H.L.M.

De Kruif: Mencken had known him since 1919, when he encouraged de Kruif to go into the popularization of science and medicine. The year after Mencken wrote this letter to Sara, de Kruif published *Microbe Hunters*, his first best-seller.

Ager: probably dialectical for *ague*.

Sherman: Stuart P. Sherman

TO THEODORE DREISER

H. L. MENCKEN  
1524 HOLLINS ST  
BALTIMORE

September 21st /1925/

Dear Dreiser:-

Many of those articles in *The Smart Set* were forgeries. English spies wrote them. Nothing issuing from my actual hand has ever failed to make three things plain: that you have an adept and lascivious style, that you are a baptized man, and that you are the handsomest book author in the Republic. If anyone tells you otherwise, call him a shit-bug in my name, hand him the enclosed card, and notify me to meet him at dawn of the next day on the vacant lot behind Alt Heidelberg at Union Hill. I have spoken.

Yours,  
Gustav of Magdala

Dreiser had written Mencken testily, charging that Mencken had criticized him in the review articles in the *Smart Set*.





TO BERNARD DE VOTO

September, 25th /1926/

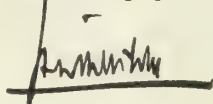
Dear Mr. De Voto:-

Save by some dreadful and unprecedented act of God, I see no chance of getting such an editorial job as you describe. They are all drudgery. Even mine is drudgery, and I am having a hell of a time getting six weeks' holiday. I think you'll be able to do far more writing if you stay where you are. The post at least gives you some leisure. As for the doings of the academic Babbitts, I see no reason why you should let them worry you. You'd find worse Babbitts in any editorial office. Laugh at them, and go on about your business.

The pressure for jobs in every magazine office is gigantic. Every Spring I receive applications from half the graduates of Vassar and Smith. The aspiring bucks are even more numerous. There is only one decent job in the average editorial office, and that is the boss's. And he is a slave.

Altogether, I advise you to take your promotion and thank the Holy Saints. You can work on your Mark Twain just as well at Evanston as in Boston, and maybe better. And you'll have time to do other writing.

Sincerely yours,



Sedgwick once offered me a job. I refused it. I was wise in them times!

A promotion from instructor of English to assistant professor seemed nothing much to De Voto as he struggled to escape from Northwestern University. He yearned for the East Coast, preferably New York or Boston, and thought that an editorial job would get him there.

Sedgwick: Ellery Sedgwick.

TO PAUL PATTERSON

July 21st /1928/

Dear Paul:-

During the past eight days (July 14-21, inc.) I have read the editorial page of The Sun very carefully, and after due prayer the following observations suggest themselves. . . . I think the page now looks better than it has ever looked in the past, but there is still plenty of chance to improve it. . . .

My doubts about "Down the Spillway," previously expressed, continue. The idea behind the column is an excellent one, but it seems to me that it is badly executed. The point of view that the stuff mirrors is somewhat feeble and obvious: it suggests that of a rather self-conscious young college professor—the sort of fellow who

admires Christopher Morley and dreams of getting a whimsical essay into The Atlantic Monthly. In brief, the flavor of Sam Chew still hangs about it. I think there ought to be more robustness, more gusto in it. It is supposed to set forth the casual meditations, not of pedagogues running a literary magazine, but of practical men engaged upon a vigorous and enterprising newspaper. I suggest some questions to test contributions. Would Edward Bok think this was charming? Would it fit into the Hound & Horn, published at Harvard? Would William Lyon Phelps regret that he had not written it? One yes should be sufficient to exclude. . . .

The Letters to the Editor could stand a lot of improvement. Too many of them are quite pointless, too many are by numskulls, and too many are unsigned. . . .

The editorial page miscellany is well selected, especially the longer pieces. Whoever gathers it should extend his reading as much as possible. Some of the best stuff is to be found in obscure publications. There is always a tendency in The Sun office to lean too heavily on one or two papers, notably the Manchester Guardian. The Guardian is by no means the masterpiece that it is sometimes represented to be. In many ways The Sun is already a far better paper, and there is no reason why it shouldn't be better in every way. Is anyone charged with going through the mass of propaganda papers and pamphlets that pass through the office? They are full of odd matter and useful suggestions. Stanley Reynolds, in his Evening Sun days, used to dredge superb stuff out of the Congressional Record. Someone should be told off to read it carefully. The same man should see that his name goes on the mailing-lists of all known propaganda organizations. They send out a great deal of amusing blather.

The editorials, it seems to me, are pretty well written, and the choice of subjects is good, but I believe that they are often a bit too cautious in tone. . . . The Sun is not a court of justice; it is a newspaper of the Opposition, which is to say, an open and avowed advocate of the Opposition. Its function is not to correct exercises in logic; it is to search out weaknesses in the Administration and expose them as dramatically as possible. When a Secretary of State is caught in an embarrassing predicament, made by an imbecile predecessor of his own party, it is not the business of an Opposition paper to make excuses for him. Let him do that for himself, with such aid as he can get from the organs of the Administration. It is not only the privilege of an Opposition paper to make him as uncomfortable as possible; it is its highest duty to do so. . . . One of the chief purposes of The Sun, as I understand it, is to stir up such useful hatreds. I



think it could go much further in that direction than it has gone.

Here, to be sure, I generalize rather gaily on somewhat meagre evidence. The week I have reviewed was a week of dulness. But I think it is still fair to say that The Sun has by no means made effective use of the opportunities standing before it to lead the Opposition. It has seldom assaulted the Administration with any vigor. The Kent articles have defended Hoover with great ingenuity, even when he was plainly caught with the goods; the paper itself has let him off with a few mild remonstrances. Thus the average reader, and especially the average intelligent reader, has probably got the notion that it is disposed to be friendly to him. The only way to dispose of that error is to tackle him head-on. Good chances offer themselves every day. An Opposition paper should seek them out and make the most of them. The acts of the Administration should be reviewed constantly, and with the deliberate purpose of finding weaknesses in them, and those weaknesses should be denounced in plain terms and without reservations of any kind. In journalism, it seems to me, it is far better to be wrong than to be timorous. The papers that get attention are those that take a positive line, and stick to it with tenacity.

The opportunity lying before The Sun is almost unparalleled. Unlike most journals that play with ideas, it is rich, and can afford to do whatever it pleases. It has a competent editorial and news staff, and the salient men on that staff are in sympathy with its politics. Its good faith is generally admitted. It is not tied to any politician. Its only serious opposition is offered by the New York World, a paper in decay, and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, which is far away. It has no local rivals of any dignity. I believe that it ought to assert itself, and that it will. I recommend that a steady increase in editorial vigor be made a matter of fixed policy, and that editorials be printed on Page 1 whenever it is possible. There is no need to be ashamed, certainly, of what it is doing now. But it can do more. . . .

M

This is Mencken's manifesto, the single most important exposition of what he thought a newspaper should do. When Patterson solicited his views about the proper job of the newspapers, and especially the morning *Sun*, he was ready. Sam Chew: Samuel Claggett Chew, professor of English literature at Bryn Mawr, who wrote whimsical essays as well as more substantial works.

Edward Bok: the renowned and reform-minded editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal* for thirty years.

Stanley Reynolds: Washington correspondent of the *Evening Sun* until 1922, when he moved to the *Sun*, becoming managing editor.

Kent: Frank Kent, the senior political writer for the *Sun*, whose book *The Great Game of Politics* (1923) became a classic of its kind.

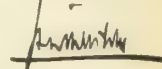
TO EZRA POUND

November 2, 1928

Dear Pound:

Lolling in Italy, you have missed the greatest show ever seen on earth. The campaign closes in two days. I have seen all of them for thirty years, but this has been the best. Al gave a superb show and Hoover was chased up every alley. Nevertheless, he'll probably win. I rejoice thereat. A ninth rate Country should have a ninth rate President.

Yours,



Pound was living in Rapallo, a small town near Genoa, and working on the *Cantos*. He and Mencken had been carrying on a gusty correspondence since 1914, if not earlier. Though his ideas and Mencken's seldom harmonized, the men esteemed one another.

TO LILLIAN GISH

Baltimore, November 16th, 1928

Friend Lillian:-

It was swell of you to send me them wursts. They beat hell out of any dogs I ever seen in this country. I have been gnawing into them for weeks, but they don't hardly seem to get no smaller scarcely. The other p.m. I was hacking a slice offen one of them and the knife slipped and I got cut. But the wurst didn't seem to be hurt none. The cut seems to be getting on so so. What is a little blood to a war hero?

Well, Lillian, I hope you let me see you the next time I get to the big town. I suppose you are having a swell time, tramping up and down Broadway and taking in the sights. I hear some swell shows are on. If you want to see any of them let me know and I can get you passes. When I get to the big town I hope you let me see you. I know a swell Italian place where you can get the real stuff. You have to hand it to the wops. They don't let no padlocks bother them none.

Well, I must make a train, and so close. I am invited down to the Eastern Shore of Maryland by a friend down there to a swell party they are giving there-terrapin, wild ducks, etc. I hear Joe Hergesheimer is coming along. He is a swell guy, and knows how to dress. I like a neat man.

Regards to George, and kindest personal regards to yourself. I hope you let me see you when I get to the big town.

Kind regards,  
M.

No padlocks: in the attempt to enforce Prohibition, the courts sometimes ordered places where liquor had been sold to be shut down and their doors padlocked.



TO G. D. EATON

December 5th /1929/

Dear Eaton:-

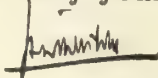
I think this protest would be unwise. It plainly indicates that the Protestants have been damaged and are alarmed. Speaking for The American Mercury I must refuse to admit any such thing. We print whatever we please about Christian Scientists, and pay no attention to their objections. In one of the early issues of the magazine, in fact, I served public notice upon them that we were against them, and since then I have heard from them but twice. Once their press representative in New York called upon me and we had a very frank and friendly conversation. He made no demands and no threats, and left with the clear understanding that he could expect nothing from the magazine. The other time the press committee asked me to print a caveat to certain statements made by Dakin in his book. I refused flatly, and that was all.

Your third paragraph, mentioning The American Mercury, is in error. No delegation of Christian Scientists has ever visited the office, nor have I ever heard of any threat to molest advertisers. I know of no advertisement that was lost because of Christian Scientist pressure. If anything of the sort came to pass we'd sue at once. That, it seems to me, is what the Scribners should do now. Protests are worth nothing, but notice of a suit for damages always gets attention.

I had it out with the Christian Scientists in Baltimore nearly 20 years ago, and they have been quiescent there ever since. My plan was simply to damn them day in and day out, disregarding their protests. As fast as they could meet one accusation I printed five or six more. They are immensely vulnerable. Their whole literature reeks with palpable nonsense.

As I say, my advice is against printing a protest. If you want to do something against them, print half a dozen articles exposing their methods. But don't do anything to make it appear that they are actually doing damage. Their uproar, as a matter of fact, probably helped rather than hindered the sales of the Dakin book.

Sincerely yours,



In this letter to the editor of the journal *Plain Talk* (an imitation of the *Mercury*), who was also a contributor to the *Mercury*, Mencken makes what is perhaps his best statement on how he thinks an editor should deal with sectarians in general and Christian Scientists in particular. In the letter Mencken was answering, Eaton had proposed a round robin of magazine editors against attempts at censorship by Christian Scientists.

The Dakin book: *Mrs. Eddy: The Biography of a Virginal Mind*, by Edwin Dakin.

H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan



TO EDITH LUSTGARTEN

July 28th /1930/

Dear Miss Lustgarten:-

Barring acts of God and the public enemy, I am to be married on August 27th. The bride-elect is Sara Haardt, a talented girl of great courage. Tear up her card in the index: if she ever works for the magazine hereafter it will have to be for nothing!

Say nothing about the business for the moment. I am telling the Knopfs and Angoff, but the announcement will not be made until next Sunday. Make a note that wedding presents are absolutely forbidden. We go under the canopy very quietly. I have refused the free use of the Kaisersaal at Schellhase's for a public reception.

My one hope is that the hubbub promotes the sale of *Treatise on the Gods*. Outfitting a swell apartment turns out to be very expensive.

Yours,  
M

Edith Lustgarten was office secretary of the *Mercury*.



Sara Haardt and H. L. Mencken



TO PHILIP GOODMAN

Baltimore, Md.  
October 30th, (1930).

Dear Phil:

That mirror is goddam swell. I am putting it up at once, and shall use it for tying neckties—a great art, neglected in these later days. Do you remember the time when you had a gold ring, and ran your tie through it? Do you remember the Ascot? Do you remember the ready-made four-in-hand, with a metal pin to thrust through it? Do you recall wearing a stick-pin set with a large garnet? If not, then you are losing your memory, a bad sign. My very best thanks for the glass.

I shall call you up next Wednesday, some time in the late afternoon. Will you communicate with Boyd? I suggest victualing at the Athletic Club, and then meeting him at 9 P.M. or thereabout.

Hemphill dreams of carrying York and Lancaster. He says he has Scranton and Wilkes-Barre sewed up.

Yours,  
(M.)

That mirror: a wedding present from the Goodmans in spite of Mencken's strictures.

Boyd: Ernest Boyd.

Hemphill: John Hemphill, Hergesheimer's brother-in-law and the Republican candidate for governor of Pennsylvania.

TO WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

April 30, 1931.

My dear White:

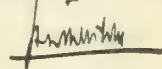
I find your note on my return from Boston, where I have been spending a week with the Harvard illuminati. It is capital news that your illness is no worse. Certainly you have nothing to complain of if all that ails you is a slight disarrangement of the balancing mechanism. Let us not forget that after fifty the human organism begins to show a certain slackness. On all sides I see my friends and contemporaries falling. Those that can still function at all, it seems to me, are lucky. As for me, I suffer from four or five minor malaises, two of them painful. Nevertheless, I manage to get through a fair day's work, and am even planning—perhaps somewhat idiotically—to start a new book. I hope the gentlemen of the faculty liberate you presently and restore you to the daily grind. God knows the country needs you.

What you say about the old-time saloon is sad, but I am disposed to believe that it is absolutely true. My fear is that I'll be an angel before the swinging doors begin to swing again, and the potato salad slides

along the bar. However, there is no law against advocating an ideal, and so I whoop for mine. It is my solemn belief, based on careful observation, that the saloon, at least in this part of the country, did far more good than harm. Its evils were grossly exaggerated by sentimentalists who had no personal acquaintance with it. The average saloon, I believe, was far superior to the average home in its vicinity. It was not only cleaner, it was more decorous. The same man who roared and howled at his wife and children had to step softly the moment he passed through those swinging doors. If he didn't, the bartender's bung-starter was sure to correct him.

I hope you are on your legs very soon, and that you come East for a holiday. It would be a grand pleasure to see you in Baltimore. The whole general staff of the two Suns would turn out to greet you.

Sincerely yours,



The editor of the *Emporia Gazette* struck a chord when he wrote Mencken on April 23 and mentioned that he was suffering from vertigo.

TO A. O. BOWDEN

April 12, 1932.

Dear Dr. Bowden:

Here are my attempts to answer your questions:

1. I seldom do any writing during the day. An old newspaper habit inclines me to night work. Moreover, it is more comfortable to write then, for there are fewer telephone calls and less other noise.

2. I put in practically all of my waking hours at one form or other of work. I commonly devote the mornings to reading manuscripts and mail for *The American Mercury* and the afternoons to various other editorial duties. Thus I am thrown upon the evenings for the chance to work.

3. I rest whenever I can at irregular intervals. Like most men, I am lazy by nature and seize every opportunity to loaf.

4. I have no favorite form of exercise, for all exercise seems to me to be a bore. However, I like to walk when I have anywhere to go, and do a good deal of walking here in Baltimore.

5. My experience is that no man can write continuously for more than three hours—in fact, it is seldom that he can go beyond two hours. After that, though he may keep on writing, he will not produce anything fit to print.

6. I revise my manuscripts relatively little. Long newspaper experience has taught me how to think out what I want to write before I set it down.

7. I work best, like most men, in my own



work-room. I have always found it impossible to do any writing in New York. The town is too noisy for it and I am too much interrupted by bores.

8. Very few books, it seems to me, are worth reading thoroughly. When I find one I read every word of it, but ordinarily I proceed more rapidly and it is seldom that the ordinary book occupies me for more than two hours.

9. I commonly work on two or three projects at a time. If I am writing, say, a book, I must also give a great deal of attention to current magazine and newspaper work.

10. I have no plan for getting the most out of my time. I simply do the best I can.

11. I keep notes, but often lose them. When I am writing a book I gather them together and sort them out in a more or less orderly manner. However, it is my experience that half of them always go to waste.

12. When I am writing I try to exclude all other thoughts. This, of course, is sometimes difficult.

13. Your thirteenth question is rather vague. I try to keep my mind on the track, but it naturally tends to fly off. It often happens that while at work on one thing I am seized with what seem to be excellent ideas for another. I always make notes of them, but usually those notes turn out to be useless.

14. This has been answered under #9.

15. I simply can't work when anyone else is in the room. Nor have I ever heard of any other writer who could. It is done, of course, in newspaper offices, but even there it is not done by men who are trying to write careful stuff.

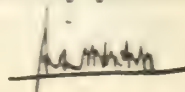
16. Sometimes it goes one way and sometimes another. My ideas are suggested by reading, but I find that even more are suggested by conversations with intelligent friends.

17. I read almost everything. I boast indeed that I can read anything. One of my favorites is the Congressional Record. It is commonly thought to be dull, but that is a superstition. There is more good stuff in it than in any newspaper ever heard of.

18. I use a Corona typewriter. It would be difficult for me to try to write by hand. I have not done so for more than thirty years. I can dictate letters and other such things, but I find it difficult to dictate anything for print. Perhaps I could manage it if I tried hard, but so far I have found it more convenient to use the typewriter myself.

19. This question, it seems to me, is unanswerable. Men who are destined for success by God will inevitably become successful. Nothing can be done to save the others.

Sincerely yours,



Aberdeen Orlando Bowden, president of New Mexico State Teachers College, was a contributor to educational journals and interested in the routines of writers. In answering his questions Mencken provided our best available picture of how he went about his work.

TO THE GEORGE SCHAEFER-H.C. PFAFF CIGAR CO.

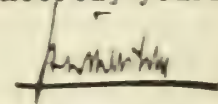
September 28, 1932.

The Schaefer-Pfaff Cigar Co.,  
Wolfe & Aliceanna Sts.,  
Baltimore, Md.

Gentlemen:

Will you please send me 300 Uncle Willies,  
in 50s, without bands?

Sincerely yours,



Though Mencken puffed on a corn cob pipe from time to time, his favorite smoke was Uncle Willies. They were long, mean cigars and he enjoyed them decade after decade.

This order was only one of 100 orders.

TO HARRY RICKEL

H. L. MENCKEN  
524 HOLLINS ST  
BALTIMORE

March 27th /1933/

Dear Rickel:-

Last Sunday I manufactured five gallons of Methodistbräu. It turned out to be very tasty, as Dreiser would say, but I bottled too soon, and the result has been a series of fearful explosions. Last night I had three quart bottles in my side yard, cooling in a bucket. Two went off at once, bringing my neighbor out of his house with yells. He thought that Soviets had seized the town. I have lost about 12 good Apollinaris bottles, but still trust in God. Next time I shall wait until the fermentation is finished. Just now another blew up in my cellar. However, I have the bottle covered with bags, and there is no damage. I invited two beer fanatics to test the stuff last night. I opened the bottle wearing heavy automobile gloves and with bagging and a fire-screen to protect me. When the stopper was thrown back, all save about two gills blew out. But the fanatics pronounced the two gills very soothing.

I shall make some dandelion wine if I can find a dandelion. But down here they are not to be trusted. Dogs always piss on them. Also, now and then, a policeman.

Yours,

M



TO FRANCIS HACKETT

June 10, 1933.

Francis Hackett, Esq.  
Newtownmountkenedy,  
County Wicklow, Ireland.

Dear Hackett:

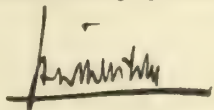
Once more, we have proven that virtue is an evil in this world. Almost alone among American magazines, The American Mercury is still paying authors promptly. As a result, your check got off to Ireland before your letter of May 29th came in, and so your instructions could not be followed.

It is excellent news that you and Mrs. Hackett are coming back in October. You'll see a show that has not been matched in the world since the fall of the Roman Empire. For years I predicted that this great Republic is a fair weather sailor and that at the first sign of serious trouble the American people would show a tremendous demoralization. It has certainly happened. You will be amazed to hear the talk that is going on among the so-called well-to-do. Nine-tenths of them seem to be convinced that a revolution is on us and the rest simply wander around in a haze. As for me, I see no reason for serious alarm. The saving class is being shaken out of its accumulated money—a phenomenon of regular occurrence in the Western world. There is still plenty to eat in America and getting it to those who need it is, after all, not an insoluble problem.

As soon as the schemes of the Brain Trust get under way, a large number of new speculators will begin to get rich and we'll have what is called prosperity again. If you still read The New Republic you are aware of the painful contortions of the brethren. They have been wobbling between Communism and despair for three or four years past, and now hang on to the Brain Trust without knowing where it is going. Altogether, the show is magnificent and I have been having a roaring time. My only hope is that there will be another general war before I pass from these scenes. The last one was lovely, but it was over too soon.

I am planning to get a sabbatical year in 1934 and finish a couple of books that have been hanging fire for three or four years. Editing a magazine is a full-time job and my energy is now somewhat less than it was back in the last century.

Sincerely yours,



Born in Ireland, Hackett returned there after a career as an author and editor in the United States. His books and articles were mainly on Irish matters. The *Mercury* piece he thought he had not been paid for was a poem, "There Is a Land," which came out in the August 1933 number.

The *New Republic*: Hackett was associate editor from 1914 to 1922.

TO EDGAR LEE MASTERS

August 11, 1934.

Dear Masters:

You will be saddened, though you didn't know her personally, to hear of the death of Miss Pearl Snow. She was in public life in Baltimore for thirty-five years, and had the respect and good will of large numbers of its leading men. Her establishment in Watson Street was conducted in an extremely hightoned manner, and during the whole period of her administration the cops had business in it only half a dozen times. She specialized in entertaining members of Congress, many of whom dropped over from Washington of an evening to discuss public matters with her. Her staff of internes was mainly recruited from York County, Pennsylvania, where she was born herself, her maiden name being Tillie Crouse. She was buried from St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, and a large congregation was in attendance, including many public men. The pastor, Dr. Schwartzman, devoted his discourse to arguing that it is always unwise to judge anyone harshly, and that there is undoubtedly a lot of good in all of us. I took the liberty of dropping a tear in your name.

Yours,  
HLM

Masters thanked Mencken for the sad news of Miss Snow's demise and added that it might explain a recent dream he had about a fire in a whorehouse. He told Mencken that he doubtless had it at "the hour of Miss Snow's departure," and wondered if Mencken could tell him what that hour was.

TO EDGAR LEE MASTERS

August 18, 1934.

Dear Masters:

My apologies for this delay in replying to your inquiry about the exact moment of Miss Pearl Snow's death. The only person with her at the time was her old chief-of-staff, Miss Lola Pearson, and it took me several days to come up with her, for she had gone back to Red Lion, Pennsylvania, immediately after the funeral, and returned here only yesterday. She tells me that Miss Pearl passed away precisely at 2.15 A.M. on Friday, August 10th. Please don't forget to remind your astrologers



that this is God's time, not daylight time. Daylight time was tried here in Maryland for several years, but Christian sentiment lined up against it and so it was abolished. We now follow the will of Heaven, as it is interpreted by the Naval Observatory at Washington.

It is a well-known fact that calamities always come in threes. A month or two ago Miss Cora Edwards died, and then followed Miss Pearl Snow. I now hear that Miss Mary Healy is on her death-bed, with her exodus expected at any moment. She is extremely advanced in age, and has been retired from public life for years. Nevertheless, I am old enough to remember when she was a leading figure in the town, and the intimate of many eminent men. I have myself seen three United States Senators, a governor, a mayor and two Congressmen in her parlor at one time, all drunk and each with a girl on his knee. This was in the palmy days of America, before sociology and political economics combined to ruin us. If Miss Mary passes away I'll notify you by the Morse telegraph.

Yours,  
M

TO FULTON OURSLER

May 18, 1935.

Dear Fulton:

I enclose a letter from S. N. Phillips, superintendent of the Western Union here in Baltimore. Obviously, the witches of Massachusetts got into the wires. I am only glad that the failure of the telegram to reach you didn't interfere with our meeting. Sara and I were delighted to see you and Grace, and we only hope that the next time you head this way you'll have more time.

I am taking Sara to the Adirondacks about June 1st. The chiropractors decided that that is the place for her, and she must follow their orders. She is, of course, not actively ill, but they think that she needs a few months in the mountains. We have found a little place at Turtle Pond, and I'll probably spend a couple of weeks with her in July. We are both dreadfully sorry that this will interfere with our projected visit to West Falmouth. But we all have hundreds of years of life ahead of us, and maybe the chance for a session there will offer anon.

My best thanks for the check, which reached me yesterday. I shall fall upon another article in a little while. As I understand it, you want a piece on the schools for the Fall. It should be in your hands by the end of June.

Yours,  
M

"We all have hundreds of years of life ahead of us," Mencken writes briskly here, never realizing that Sara was suffering the onset of her final illness.

Thanks for the check: *Liberty* paid Mencken a handsome \$1,000 per article. In his ledger, under the date of May 17, 1935, he noted the receipt of the check he mentions. It was in payment for "Peace on Earth—Why We Have Wars," which Oursler did not print till December 26, 1936. The article on the schools never came through, since Mencken was increasingly preoccupied with his wife's health.

TO MAX BROEDEL

H. L. MENCKEN  
704 CATHEDRAL ST.  
BALTIMORE

Wednesday /May 29, 1935/

My dear Max:-

Sara has meningitis, with t.b. bacilli in the spinal fluid. It is, of course, completely hopeless. She seems comfortable—at least far more comfortable than she was a few days ago. The horrible headache has passed off, and she sleeps peacefully all day long. She may be aroused for half a minute, but hardly for more. This is the climax of her long series of illnesses. It would be silly to say that I have not anticipated it; in fact, I have dreaded it constantly. But it is appalling to face.

What is directly ahead I don't know. She fights magnificently in the shadows, with a strong heart and steady pulse. But it can't be long now.

Yours,  
M

TO F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

June 7, 1935.

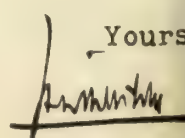
F. Scott Fitzgerald, Esq.,  
Grove Park Inn,  
Asheville, N. C.

My dear Scott:

Thanks so much for your two notes. Poor Sara made an extraordinarily gallant, brave and patient struggle, but it had been uphill for several years past, and a couple of weeks ago it became completely hopeless. I am going to England for a few weeks with my brother, who has been ill.

When are you returning to Baltimore? Certainly we must have a session. I only hope that Zelda is showing a steady improvement.

Yours





December 27, 1935.

Dear Masters:

The whole Christmas buffoonery is a curse to humanity—perhaps one of the worst curses that Christianity has brought in. Growing up in a German family, I enjoyed the day—but only transiently. Before Christmas afternoon was half over I always came down with violent pains in the stomach, and usually had to be put to bed with an extra dose of castor oil. This was because at Christmas cakes and candies were on open display and might be eaten ad libitum. At all other times of the year we were on strict sanitary rations, but at Christmas it was considered only right and decent to let the children half kill themselves. I escaped death by a millimeter every Christmas day between 1884 and 1895.

In these later years New Year's seems to me to be even gloomier than Christmas. I remember once as a young reporter covering a series of no less than seven suicides, all of them in cheap lodging houses. The poor dogs marooned there simply couldn't face the horrors of the New Year, and so they bumped themselves off. It was not always poverty that inspired them. One of them hanged himself with a thousand dollars in cash in his pocket. I remember well when the cop pulled it out. Only the cop, the coroner and I were present. The cop looked at the coroner, the coroner looked at me, and I looked at the cop. We didn't have the courage to divide it, and so my whole career was determined at that moment. If the coroner had given me \$300 I'd have started a saloon.

Yours,  
M

This year Mencken's complaints against Christmas were more strident than usual, but there was a reason, not mentioned in the letter to Masters—it was the first Christmas since Sara's death.



H. L. MENCKEN trying to think of more things that annoy him.



THE AMERICAN MERCURY

220 West Forty-second Street  
NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE EDITORS

George Jean Nathan and H. L. Mencken

James Macmillan:

Indubitably on  
now only is such that  
things as about as rather  
impossible. What else  
have you?

Love you

H. L. Mencken

A rare example of a handwritten Mencken letter, from James Lowe Autographs, New York, N.Y.

TO CORLISS LAMONT

April 22, 1936.

Dear Dr. Lamont:

Thanks very much for your letter, which has just reached me on my return from a speech-making trip to New York, a somewhat rare dissipation for me. I met Heywood Brown on the train going up, and we had a long gabble on the horrors of human existence. I must say that, for a friend of the downtrodden, he looked to be extraordinarily well fed.

The other day, re-reading Huxley's essay on Government, 1880, I came upon this:

"The results of political changes are hardly ever those which their friends hope or their foes fear."

I must have picked this up as a boy, for I have been preaching it ever since I began to write. Thus I agree with you completely that, if anything resembling Communism is ever set up in America, it will probably come in by some route differing considerably from the Russian route, and produce different effects. Nevertheless, it seems



to me to be fair to say that when the American Communists speak of a revolution, the thing they have in mind is essentially a repetition of the Russian revolution. And that the thing which principally excites them is the thought that, when it comes, they will get a grand chance to cut off the ears of persons they now dislike. I detect very little that can be rationally described as reason in their tirades. They swallow palpable nonsense, and reject multitudes of plain facts. In brief, they are moved by passion, not by logic, and I believe that their principal passion is the old motive—power of democracy, to wit, envy.

You say that you are not a Communist, and I must, of course, accept it. But if you had said it in time I'd have had to put you into the "I Am Not a Communist-But" Club that I am launching in the American Mercury for May, with Broun and Upton Sinclair as charter members. It seems to me that the fact that you are not actually a member of the party is immaterial. You are giving aid and encouragement to undoubted Communists, and you are certainly not making very clear the nature of your dissent from their position. Inasmuch as I believe, as I have said, that they are all suspicious characters, intellectually speaking, I simply can't imagine how you can arrive at any alliance with them, however reserved, by a process of reason. I'd as soon enter into an alliance with chiropractors, Methodist bishops, or, indeed, New Deal uplifters. . . .

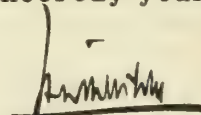
Your argument against me in "Soviet Planning in Socialist Russia" is fair shooting, but it overlooks one of my points. That is that social capital enslaves the worker quite as much as any other kind of capital. He must work or starve in Russia as well as here, and the kind of work he must do is mainly determined, not by his own inclinations, but by the needs and ambitions of the bosses controlling the social capital. He has no right to strike, and only the feeblest sort of right [to] bargain. Even protest and remonstrance may be hazardous to him. My contention is that he is thus worse off than his brother in the United States. Even the unemployed here are probably better fed and housed than skilled workmen in Russia. And if not, they are at least free to holler, which is surely something.

The general incompetence of the Russian industrial machine is the sempiternal incompetence of politicians. They do everything badly. I must confess that I prefer a country where plumbing is carried on by plumbers, and the pipes actually work, even though those plumbers operate from the dug-outs of intrenched greed, and must be paid lavishly for exercising their art. Not infrequently, enjoying

the comforts of a good bathroom, I suspect that they may really deserve what they demand.

My apologies for an over-long letter. I haven't had the pleasure of meeting your brother, but I must know a great many of his colleagues. Do you ever come to Baltimore to see him? If so, I hope you let me hear of it the next time. The cooks here have enlightened ideas, and the best beer in America is on tap. I repay you for making me read "Socialist Planning" by sending you a book weighing nearly four pounds, and as completely devoid of politics as a college yell. Your book against immortality, of course, I know. It seems to me to be a very sound and effective piece of work.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Corliss Lamont,  
450 Riverside Drive,  
New York City.

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In all Mencken's correspondence this is probably the most cogent explanation of how he stood on Communism and why.  
Dr. Lamont: a Columbia Ph.D. in philosophy.

Heywood Broun: a prominent radical reporter and writer, he was quite fat.

"Soviet Planning in Socialist Russia": Mencken was mistaken; Lamont's pamphlet was called "Socialist Planning in Soviet Russia."

Your brother: Austin Lamont, an anesthesiologist, had begun to teach at the Johns Hopkins Medical School the year before.

TO THEODORE DREISER

May 26, 1936.

Dear Dreiser:

Your mocking doesn't shake me. I am still convinced, on the massive evidence brought forth by Father Vogel, that demoniacal possession is still possible on this earth. Moreover, I am convinced that it is rampant in Iowa. The fact explains many other inexplicable phenomena in that great State.

I have lately discovered that the State of Maryland maintains an official board for inspecting madstones. I have procured a specimen passed by it, and shall send it to you in a few days. It is said to be efficacious, not only against hydrophobia, but also against 10,000 other diseases, most of them fatal. The chairman of the board tells me that clapping it on the head behind either ear for two minutes will cure the most frightful headache ever heard of. It is also said to be helpful in cases of impotence, but on this point I offer no opinion.

I have been sweating away here in this lovely weather writing a history of the Baltimore Sun, which will be 100 years



old next year. Once the job is off my hands, I'll start for the two national conventions. I surely wish you were coming along. The shows this year will be really magnificent. The worst quacks ever heard of on earth will be assembled, and they'll all be on their toes. I look for such obscenities as the human eye has never hitherto beheld. If you are still collecting postcards I'll be able to send you one from Cleveland and another from Philadelphia. Let me know about this. I don't want to waste the money on the stamps if you have stopped collecting them. God help us all!

Yours,  
M

Madstones: from the time in his early twenties when he invented a wild man in the outskirts of Baltimore in order to enliven the pages of his paper, Mencken showed his relish for practical joking. His brother August once collected the records and evidence of his hoaxes and they filled a slip-case. They ranged from the creation and ultimate perfection of an imaginary uncle named Fred to the discovery of Maryland madstones. For them Mencken had a tag printed up, on which the proper state authorities certified the genuineness of the stone; the tag went with each stone he sent out.

TO AILEEN PRINGLE

June 29, 1936.

Miss Aileen Pringle,  
722 Adelaide Place,  
Santa Monica, California.

Dear Aileen:

I have just got in from the Philadelphia convention and feel like the oldest man on earth. It was in its way a lot of fun, but it was also a dreadfully tedious job and full of grief for journalists. On the closing day the orgies in Franklin Field were really dreadful. The press-stands were wobbly, the rain soaked both typewriters and copy paper, there was no adequate light and a great swarm of ringers climbed all over the newspaper boys and girls. Several times in the course of the evening I was almost at the point of cursing God and dying, but I managed to survive somehow. When you read my account of the proceedings please remember that it was done in twelve separate pieces and that what appears as its opening part was really written last. The other pieces are full of typographical errors, but such things simply can't be helped under the conditions that have to be faced at a national convention.

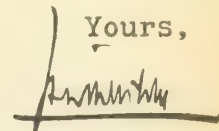
My stuff is never printed in any paper save the Baltimore Sun. I have had overtures from time to time from virtually all the syndicates in the country, including the Hearst syndicates, but I have always managed to resist them. If I had

two papers to write for I'd be thinking of the limitations of both, and if there were three I'd have all three to think of and so on ad infinitum. Writing for the Sun alone, I know precisely how far I can go and what the customers will understand and like. Writing for syndicates always dilutes a man's stuff. To be sure, it brings in a pretty penny, but I don't need the money and am thus not disposed to put up with nuisance.

I don't recall writing any abuse of Hearst. I have mentioned him from time to time, and there is some reference to him in an article I am printing in the July American Mercury, but on the whole I am rather in favor of him. He has, to be sure, engaged in practices that as a professing Christian I must abhor, but on the other hand he has helped to make journalism amusing and has apparently had a swell time himself. The worst charge I hear against him is that he was once guilty of adultery, but I am told that he has given up this evil practise in recent years, and so I am willing to forgive him. Certainly he is a much better man than most of his enemies. The radicals who rant against him would all be delighted if he gave them easy jobs. He did more to lift journalism salaries in this country than any other publisher.

More [anon], when I get the sand out of my eyes. I always enjoyed political conventions, and they are certainly exhausting.

Yours,



On becoming engaged to Sara Haardt, Mencken had asked Aileen Pringle to return his letters. With the request he had sent back her letters to him. She had felt hurt at this excess of formality but complied. She wrote to him after Sara's death and thus took the first step in reviving their attachment.

TO H. W. SEAMAN

December 5, 1936.

H. W. Seaman, Esq.,  
46 Neville St.,  
Norwich, England.

Dear Seaman:

In this country sympathy seems to be running mainly in favor of His Majesty, but I must confess that I have some doubts myself. A man in his position is under the obligation to play the game according to the rules, and it seems to me that he has failed. Obviously, it would not do for the King of England to have two morganatic brothers-in-law hanging about the back door of the palace. His job pays him an excellent salary and surrounds him

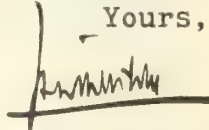


with an enormous amount of adulation. I believe that in return for these great boons he should be willing to make some sacrifices of his own private inclinations. Moreover, I am convinced that his love affair is ridiculous in itself. If the lady were a beautiful virgin, or even a lovely widow, it would be something else again, but to fall for a highly oxidized double-divorcée is certainly not to be put down as heroic.

If these observations offend you as a patriotic Britisher, I apologize most profoundly. The effect of the sudden burst of headlines in London must have been gigantic. My brother and I have been lamenting the fact that we are not on the scene to enjoy the show. In this country the story has crowded the Spanish revolution completely off the first pages—in fact, it has crowded all other news inside. I haven't seen the New York Times for a couple of days, but I am sure that it must be printing at least three solid pages a day. Here in Baltimore the Sun is doing almost as well. The story, as the actors say, has everything. It is the most colossal Cinderella story heard of in centuries, and it is full of melodramatic details. In brief, it is probably the best newspaper story since the Resurrection. I assume that it has got you into its clutches and that you are kept jumping.

Let me hear from you when you feel like it.

Yours,



Baltimoreans had a particular interest in the crisis which led, on December 11, 1936, to the abdication of Edward VIII. The woman he announced he could not live without belonged to an old Baltimore family, the Warfields. She had already been divorced once before divorcing Ernest Simpson to marry the Duke of Windsor.

TO MAX BROEDEL

July 1st /1938/

Dear Max:-

I enclose the programme of a swell concert. Despite the fact that it was given in an open courtyard almost a block long, the acoustics were perfect. Benda took the Gluck overture much slower than we play it. I rather like our own style better.

The weather here is perfect, and the country is lovely. I was in Leipzig last week, and made an automobile tour through the country in the neighborhood of Oschatz, where my great-grandfather was hanged in 1835. It was hard to understand the Bauern, but I had a Leipziger chauffeur who translated into Leipzig German, and so I made out pretty well.

The crops, all save fruit, are very large,

and the poor Bauern are worked to death by the harvest. They actually turn out at 5 A.M. and stay in the fields until dark, which is 10 P.M. All the young men have gone to the cities, where jobs are plentiful. There is a real shortage of labor, and the papers are full of Help Wanted ads. Some of this may be military preparation, but a lot of it is building. In almost every street in Berlin some new building is going up.

The Jewish business is somewhat mysterious. Plenty of Jewish stores are still open, and seem to be doing a fair trade. Some of them are marked with the names of their owners, thus:

MARIE: MODE

Inh. Jakob Finkelstein

But not all are so marked. I have seen no daubing of shop-windows. A very few shops are marked "arierische Geschäft" or something of the kind, but only a few. In Hamburg, Bremen, Leipzig, Magdeburg, Braunschweig, Halle and Potsdam even the Inhaber signs are missing. There has been some plain exaggeration in the newspaper reports, but even so the situation of some of the Jews is very bad. They have been driven out of many small towns, and are concentrated in the cities. The Public Health Service doctor at the American consulate told me that many of the richer ones are trying to get visas for the United States. Only those who have well-to-do friends or relatives in America are passed.

I am off for Danzig tomorrow, and if I have time shall proceed to Frankfurt on my return to Berlin, and try to see something of the Rhine and the Schwarzwald before I return. I am booked to sail on the Europa July 19th. My German is holding out pretty well, and so far I have never had to call for help. Sometimes the people I try it on look astonished, but they always understand it.

My gizzard is behaving pretty well. I am avoiding wine, and concentrating on beer. The Pilsener here is much better than at home. Despite the row with the Czechs, it is sold everywhere.

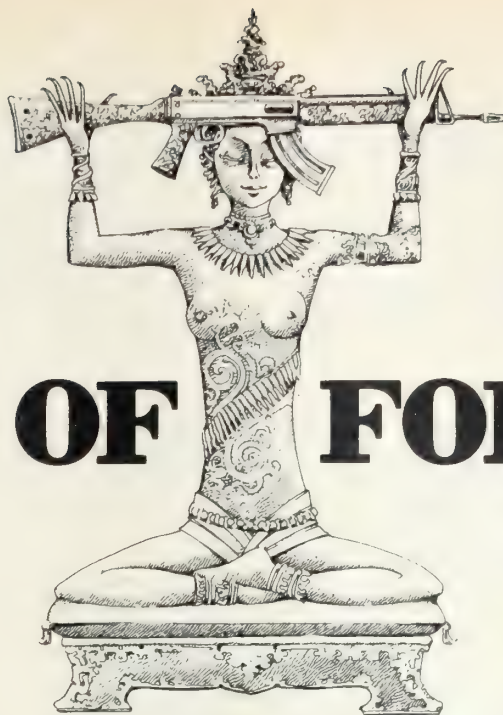
Yours

In mid-June 1938 Mencken sailed for Germany. It presented a mixed picture to Mencken as he reported it to Broedel. The weather was fine, the crops bountiful, and the people busy. But the persecution of the Jews was an undoubted fact, and, for some of them, damaging indeed. For other as Mencken saw it, it was less so. In cases where the name of a business, such as "Marie: Mode," was not also the name of the Jewish proprietor, his name now had to be set beside it. But in certain cities Mencken did not even see the "Inhaber" or "Proprietor" signs. He could not bring himself to believe that the American newspapers were reporting Hitler's outrages accurately.

Bauern: peasants.

Arierische Geschäft: Aryan business.





# FEAR OF FOREIGNERS

LONG AGO—BEFORE CUBA, Vietnam, and Angola—there was a time when liberals in the Western world were overwhelmingly optimistic about the developing countries. Conservatives had never any illusions to begin with. As colonial empires fell, long before Saigon, they predicted anarchy and bloodshed as the inevitable outcome of the attempts of inferior races to govern themselves. With a contented chuckle they noted new disasters, new atrocities, while the white man's burden was gradually lifted from the tired old backs of European nations. At least, the conservatives seemed to feel, the collapse in the colonies did not immediately threaten their own well-being at home, except through a possible sudden end to hunting tigers and the imperial sundowner on tropical islands.

The liberals in the West had many more illusions.

In the late 1950s, when Fidel was still in the vanguard and considered by many a radical agrarian reformer, and when most of the former French and British territories in Africa were about to receive what later proved to be a somewhat mortgaged independence, there was considerable enthusiasm for the Third World among well-intentioned men and women somewhere left of center in U.S. and Western European politics.

*Uhuru*—Swahili for *freedom*, if you have forgotten—was a popular word in those days. When F. Kennedy had taken a very personal interest in the war of liberation in Algeria (a war that threatened French, not U.S., interests), and kept around himself a group of equally well-intentioned enthusiasts who insisted it would be a good idea to enroll bright young Americans in a worldwide

crusade, called the Peace Corps, which would teach their counterparts in developing nations the virtues of boiling their drinking water, using antibiotics rather than black magic, and looking to the United States as the first revolutionary young nation in the world.

An incredible amount of poppycock was printed and uttered about "Awakening Africa"—as if that continent had been somehow asleep during the painful years of slavery and colonization. The names of George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were trumpeted as paragons and examples to be emulated by those dazzled prime ministers of newly independent nations who found easy access to the White House and Capitol Hill, and were eagerly applauded even when they talked about revolution, because it was all, you see, patterned on the American Revolution, glorified and mummified for so long.

With tears in their eyes, Western liberals noted that the new English-speaking African nations were adopting the Westminster model complete with a two-party setup, front and back benchers, a Speaker of the House, and—in the cases of Ghana and Nigeria—even Houses of Chiefs closely patterned on the British House of Lords. The former French colonies tended to follow the Gaullist formula—not so democratic, that one—with a strong and somewhat uncontrollable president and a very weak parliament, but at least the new parliamentarians were speaking to each other in the language of Voltaire and the French Revolution. The administrative and judicial systems were carried over, lock, stock, and barrel from Europe, so that even today judges in Afro-Saxon countries have to perspire in the tropical heat (when the air conditioning breaks down) under those silly-looking very British

The menace of the Third World as a work of the Western imagination

by Bjorn Kumm

*Bjorn Kumm, a Swedish journalist, reports on Africa and Latin America for the Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet and the Toronto Globe and Mail.*



wigs. It was all very impressive, a facade which fooled practically everybody.

Then came the coups. In Latin America there were more military takeovers in the wake of the Alliance for Progress than there had been in any comparable period before. In Africa the newly imported parliamentary structures collapsed. Those new leaders so much adored and adulated in the West managed, in only a few years, to develop clearly undemocratic practices, such as one-party systems, preventive-detention laws, and what looked suspiciously like outright personality cults. Finally the local armies moved in. It was the "Latin-Americanization" of Africa, the end—or so it seemed—of democratic institution-building.

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### No more gratitude

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**I**S IT FAIR TO TRACE the present bitterness against the Third World to a sense of betrayal among Western liberals, to their feeling that their favorite underdeveloped leaders somehow let them down? The coups in the Third World coincided too, more or less, with the radicalization at home of the civil-rights movement. Northern white youngsters from good liberal families were no longer welcome to join their black brothers in the South who wanted to run their own show, talked stridently about black power, and demanded independence, so it seemed, not only from Southern sheriffs but from their Northern white supporters as well. This was a time of retrenchment. The nonwhite world was beginning to lose its charm; and then, of course, there was Vietnam.

Today there is nowhere disenchanted liberals can run to escape the crumbling colonial world. Today both liberals and conservatives feel threatened. The Third World, which is also the nonwhite world, looks very much like a New York back alley into which respectable people walking down Fifth Avenue can easily be dragged, to be mugged, mutilated, and left to bleed. Hijackings, embassy killings, bombs at airports and in planes make the world unsafe also at home. Black power has fused with oil power, creating a formidable weapon against the West.

The wish of the new terrorists, whether inside or outside OPEC, no doubt is to sabotage not only the economic functioning of the Western world, but its very political framework, the democratic system as we know it, a free press, free institutions, Western "pluralist" society. The United Nations itself seems a madhouse full of representatives of unreal,

make-believe nations. (There is an Oliphant cartoon showing them all, leaning out of the benches in a General Assembly which looks like a tropical jungle, and the plaques at the seats bear names like Skitzofrenya, New Ragia, and Psykotiqua.)

Having jettisoned their democratic Western heritage only a few years after independence, little wonder now that the Third World countries, prodded by Arab racism and Soviet imperialism, are lusting for the blood of Israel, the lonely outpost of Western principles and practices. Totalitarian systems are springing up all over the tropical world, and demanding compensation money for past sins supposed committed by the West.

So far so bad. But do today's apprehensions in the Western world show any resemblance to the situation as it actually obtains in the developing countries? Is there a threat, and if so is it a totalitarian threat? Is there a poison in ticking off casualties on a scoreboard of the few dozen or so representative democracies in the world? What if the "new nations" were never very democratic and their governments not very representative to begin with?

In India, which has often been called, by people who ought to know better, "the world's largest democracy," that democracy extended until last year mainly to the 1 or 2 percent of the population that speaks English, and today it does not even extend that far. Military takeovers in Africa or Latin America do not necessarily lead to more repressive or authoritarian regimes than the ones they replaced. What briefly went under the label of democracy in the Third World and was so ignorantly applauded was, for the most part, a phenomenon concerning a very select few.

Western political institutions were catapulted into the newly independent countries, particularly those in Africa, not as a generous gift from the colonizing power but as the final outcome of a long tug-of-war between the power and existing nationalist movements in the colony. Those who finally took over were small elites of British- or French-educated Africans, some of them with authentic popular movements behind them, others with only a money order from the CIA now and then. Most often the new leaders were recruited from ethnic groups and regions which had been closest to the colonial power and whose members had the longest history of formal Western education. Even in heavily Moslem countries this meant a preponderance of Christian leaders. The "mission boys" had a head start when it came to jobs and careers in the colonial administration.

In India a privileged land-owning class



# Why the cost of telephone service has gone up less than the cost of almost anything else.

In the late 1920's, in a Chicago factory, the history of industrial relations reached a turning point. The plant, the Hawthorne Works of the Western Electric Company, made telephones and telephone equipment for the Bell System. And in 1927 its managers had a puzzle.



*The Hawthorne Works of the Western Electric Company, scene of what one economist called "the most exciting and important study of factory workers ever made."*

For more than two years the company had been studying plant lighting and its relation to efficiency. (It was the era of the "efficiency expert" and "scientific management.") Increases in illumination were followed by increases in production, as expected. But decreases in light levels were also followed by increases in production. Two young women even maintained good production under light no brighter than moonlight.

It became clear that light had only a minor effect, and that there were many other variables to be identified. To solve the puzzle, the company undertook a further study, carried on jointly with the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration. The researchers selected a group of six competent, experienced women, explained what

they were trying to do, and requested their cooperation. Over a period of twenty-six months, the researchers added rest periods and snacks to the group's work schedule, shortened the work day, and then returned to the original schedule. The group showed an al-

most unbroken rise in average hourly production and also in total weekly production, even when the week was five hours shorter than at the start. At the end, their production was 30 percent above the beginning level.

The Hawthorne Experiments made it clear that the "scientific management" theory of the day relied too heavily on methods borrowed from the physical sciences. Two major conclusions are widely accepted now, but then their application to factory work was new:

People work better when they feel they are part of a team.

People work better when they feel what they are doing is important.

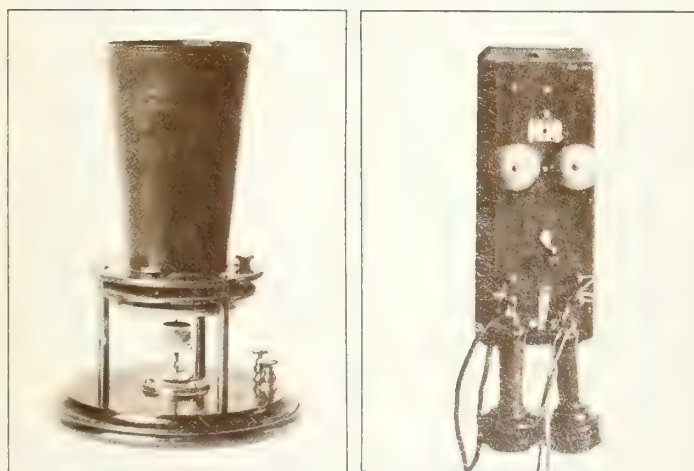
Today most businesses are aware of "group dynamics" and "job enrichment." But the lessons of Hawthorne have shaped



policy for many years, not just in Western Electric factories but in all parts of the Bell System. And the Bell System is still a leader in the exploration of factors affecting industrial productivity.

The prices of most telephone equipment made by Western Electric currently average 20 percent below the prices of other suppliers. Why?

New products for the Bell System are usually designed at Bell Laboratories, the research and development arm of the System. Bell Labs also sets quality standards. But at an early stage manufacturing engineers from Western Electric sit down with the designers and look for ways to save. All companies know that's the best time to cut costs; in the Bell System, that knowledge guides practice. The search for reduced costs continues after production begins. Every aspect of manufacturing is under constant reexamination. Western Electric's engineering cost reductions alone totaled \$198 million in first-year savings in 1975.



*An early improvement in Bell's 1876 laboratory model phone was the addition of a bell.*

Yet none of these achievements would take place unless the people involved were convinced that it is important to produce good telephones at low cost. Phillip S. Babb of McKinsey and Co., management con-

sultants, made this analysis in an interview published in the journal *International Management*:

Western Electric has succeeded in making cost-cutting a central part of the ethos, the value system, by which their people live. Driving costs down—with retained high quality—is what they spend their working lives at. It is what they take their pride in. It is their way to the corporate top.

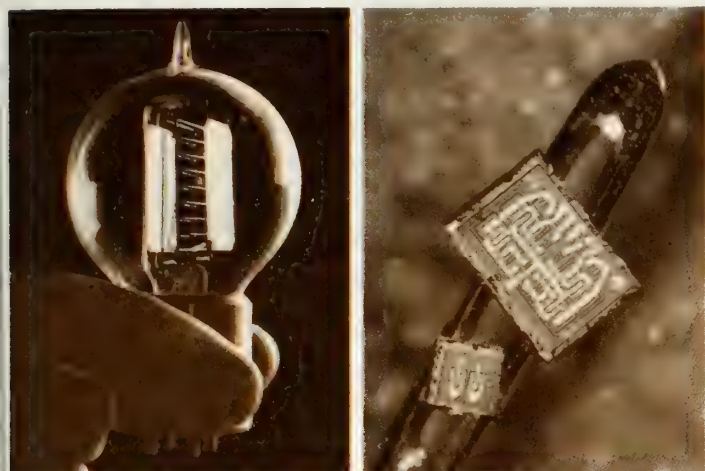
To put it another way, the business of the Bell System is providing good telephone service at reasonable cost; Western Electric's activities are directed toward that service goal, rather than toward simply making products.

That service goal characterizes all parts of the Bell System, including the twenty-three regional operating companies and the Long Lines Department. All the parts work closely together to achieve that goal, and all benefit as a result. The operating companies provide telephone service and report, through AT&T, to Bell Labs and Western Electric their needs and the needs of telephone users. Bell Labs and Western Electric design and manufacture equipment to meet known needs as well as the best estimates of expected needs. And the local companies are assured of having the products customers want. To use the vocabulary of the economist, vertical integration with organizational feedback enhances productivity throughout the Bell System.

Touche, Ross & Co., acting as consultants for the staff of the Federal Communications Commission, made a study of how this corporate structure affects costs for telephone service. According to their report written in 1974:



Western Electric's efficient performance has resulted in lower costs than otherwise would have been incurred. Because of Western's pricing policies and practices, these lower costs have not increased profits, but have been passed on to operating companies in the form of lower



*Western Electric's first commercially successful vacuum tube (left) was used in 1915 in the amplifiers that made possible the first transcontinental telephone call. Solid-state electronics, begun at Bell Labs, makes it possible for tiny integrated circuits (right) to do the work of many vacuum tubes.*

prices....The effect of the interrelationship between Bell and Western Electric is to operate Western, not as a manufacturing concern, but as an integral part of a vertically integrated communications firm. These interrelationships result in a favorable impact upon Western's costs, prices and service to operating companies.

Another major factor affecting productivity is investment in new technology—in research and development. Bell Laboratories is recognized worldwide as one of the leading development and research institutions anywhere. The achievements of Bell Labs people have won two Nobel prizes, one for the demonstration of the wave nature of matter, and the other for the invention of the transistor.

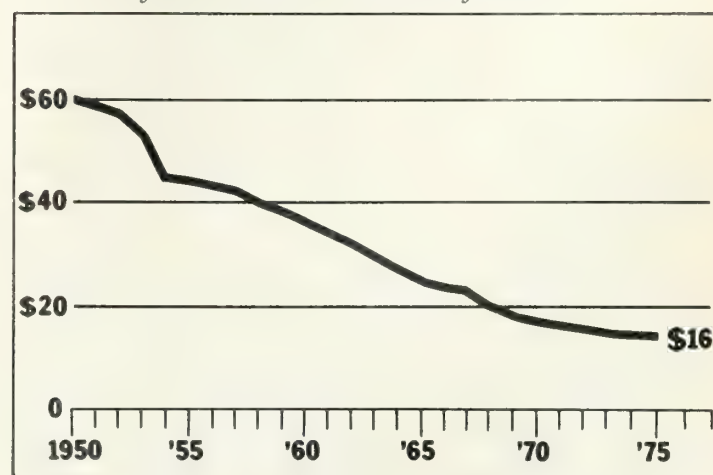
The search for new and better technology has always been a part of the telephone industry. On March 10, 1876, Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas A. Watson achieved that famous first telephone message, "Mr. Watson, come here. I want to

see you." At once they began to improve the instrument, and make it more usable. The goal, then as now, was to provide good telephone service at a price almost every American could afford.

The effect of research and engineering on costs can be seen most readily by considering how it has changed methods of transmitting calls. Bell Labs scientists found ways to send many conversations simultaneously through a pair of wires, and later through coaxial cables. They incorporated microwave radio into transmission systems for long distance calls.

In just the last quarter century, such improvements have reduced the average cost per circuit mile of the Bell System nationwide long distance network from \$60 to \$16. (See graph.) The cost of the newest coaxial cable system is less than \$2 per circuit mile.

*Average cost per circuit mile of interstate transmission facilities.*



But Bell engineers are not satisfied. Already they are preparing the technology for even greater economies and capacities when call volumes reach a level to justify using it. The new Comstar domestic satellite—being used jointly by the Bell System and GTE Satellite Corporation—in addition to standard communications traffic will



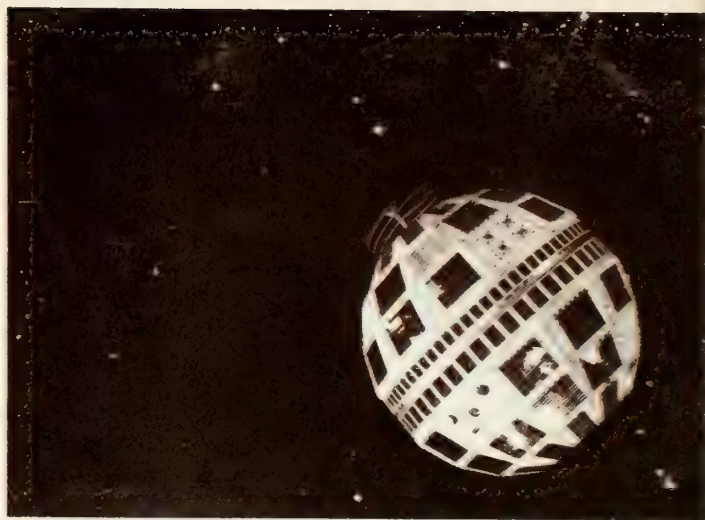
beam experimental signals to an extraordinarily precise antenna so that Bell Laboratories scientists can investigate super-high frequencies that could provide increased satellite capacity in the future. And new systems, using millimeter waveguides or laser light and glass fibers, are expected to reduce transmission costs and add new capacity also.

Another simple way to measure how technology improves productivity is to look at the number of Bell System people required to serve each 10,000 telephones. In 1925 it took 246. In 1958 it took 148. Today it takes 65.

Finally, the Bell System seeks to improve productivity by improving the methods used to manage the telephone business. For instance, the teamwork of Western Electric and Bell Labs people was cited earlier. To facilitate their interaction, some Bell Labs people work adjacent to Western Electric plants. A significant reduction has resulted in the time required to get a new design from drawing board to actual production.

The Bell System is placing greater emphasis on computerized information retrieval for the mountain of data connected with serving 118.5 million telephones. It is moving toward a standardized format for recording and storing data, to make more efficient use of computers.

The Bell System is placing greater emphasis on new methods of employee training, on the restructuring of jobs, and on



*The Bell Systems's Telstar® satellite demonstrated the feasibility of using space satellites for communications.*

efforts to build more responsibility, challenge and satisfaction into jobs at all levels. Experience to date indicates that these changes help people do a better job, reduce employee turnover, and consequently improve productivity as well.

That is exactly the result one would expect, on the basis of the 1927 Hawthorne findings. The Bell System has changed a lot since 1927. But it still emphasizes people, research, manufacturing efficiency and an organizational structure that fosters teamwork.

Data issued by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics show that overall the productivity of the telephone industry has increased 50% since 1965. That is two-and-a-half times the productivity increase of the United States economy as a whole.

In that same decade, the cost of living rose 75%. Telephone rates for local service went up only 40%. And interstate long distance rates went up about 4%. Now 95% of all American homes have telephones.

One Bell System. It works.



**Bell System**



naged to establish itself in power, using levers of a Western political system, long before Indira Gandhi decided to clamp down on political rights existing within that class. The peasants never had any rights. In Africa the ruling class is in its infancy. In order for a new class to create itself, control of government is absolutely crucial. Government is the biggest employer in any Third World country, not because of some innate bureaucratic inclinations, but because there is very little in the way of employment outside it. Independent sources of capital are few for a hopeful indigenous businessman. Government contracts help, corruption helps—it is important to have close friends in positions to award contracts and distribute government money. Introducing Western-style multiparty systems to the “young” independent countries usually meant that one of the two or more competing elite groups that had been equally exposed to Western education and Western economic influence won the first elections and went on to monopolize power. Whatever ideological labels were used, party affiliation very quickly became equivalent to ethnic or “tribal” identification.

IT WAS AT THIS POINT that the new leaders realized that they had not just taken over some fine-looking parliamentary institutions and some highfalutin talk about democracy. They had also inherited a very useful repressive machinery which had been utilized by the colonial governors for the benefit of their employers back in Europe. Colonial powers needed policemen to keep natives quiet. They needed tax collectors, backed up by loyal troops, to collect tribute from colonial subjects so that the colonies could pay for their own upkeep. In countries where a guerrilla movement challenged the colonial power, special troops and police units were built up which could fruitfully be used against striking workers and political demonstrators after independence.

There was, however, a built-in danger in the system of repression the colonial government had left behind. An ingenious trick used by the colonial power was to recruit soldiers and policemen from areas outside the area to be policed. So Mossi soldiers from the Volta in French West Africa, under the command of Senegalese Sharpshooters, were sent to fight the Rif Kabyls in Morocco as late as the 1920s (they were also used as cannon fodder by the French in World War I). Hausa and Yoruba soldiers from present-day Nigeria were used by the British on their many expe-

ditions to try to subdue the Ashanti kingdom in Ghana and carry off the Golden Stool. Very often soldiers were recruited in areas more remote, less “civilized,” than the ones the colonial power primarily wanted to control. The sophisticated Buganda people in today’s Uganda in East Africa were kept under surveillance by soldiers recruited from “backward” areas on the Sudanese border, a circumstance which was to have repercussions much later.

In the name of parliamentary democracy, fairly small elite groups grew steadily more arrogant in their hold on government at the center. They expected to be defended, as their colonial predecessors had been, by armies and police forces recruited among ethnic groups which were underrepresented in the new nation’s elite, who came from regions which had not had much chance of participating in the economic life of the nation.

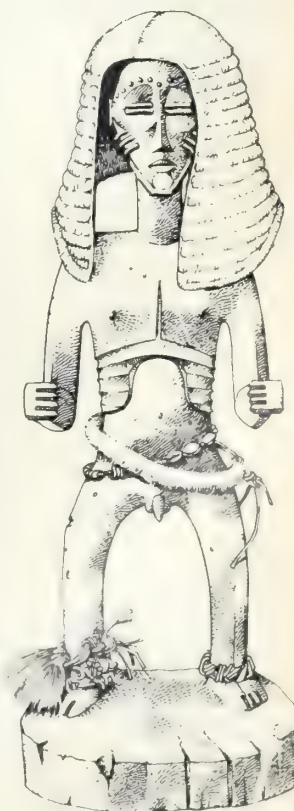
It is not surprising, then, that after a few years of increasing repression at the center the army officers who were supposed to do the dirty work rebelled and took over the government. This does not necessarily mean a step backward. The French sociologist Jacques Bugnicourt has suggested that those military coups in Africa, beginning in the mid-Sixties, which frightened the outside world insofar as they were noticed, really constituted a kind of redress of regional and ethnic injustices and a redistribution of power away from the elites. Initially, at least, they brought formerly dispossessed ethnic groups and regions closer to the seats of power and sources of money.

### The backwoods dictator

**A**LIVING PROOF of Bugnicourt’s thesis is provided by a former sergeant and sometime boxing champion in the King’s African Rifles in Uganda. His British officers found this man decidedly uncouth but were impressed by his fighting spirit—he later bragged of having dispatched opponents from the Kenyan Mau Mau guerrillas by stuffing handkerchiefs down their throats. He did not speak good English and still does not, although his command of the language has greatly improved since the days when his British superiors seemed quite content with him shouting “Yes, sir!” and “No, sir!” and standing at attention. His more educated countrymen still tend to thumb their noses at his “primitiveness.”

However, it is not necessary to dabble in psychopathology to explain the phenomenon of Field Marshal Idi Amin Dada. He is not mad. He is no African Hitler. He is quite sim-

**“Today there is nowhere disenchanted liberals can run to escape the crumbling colonial world. Today both liberals and conservatives feel threatened.”**



Martim Avillez



Bjorn Kumm  
FEAR OF  
FOREIGNERS

ply a former sergeant from the King's African Rifles, a country lad from Uganda's northernmost and most desolate regions, one of those raw recruits from the bush who were brought in by the British to police the Buganda—the people the colonial officers felt were the real threat to their control. If the tables have turned, that is the result of colonial history, not of some sudden shift in Ugandan politics toward "totalitarianism," Hitlerian madness, or murderous racism.

Idi Amin, the boy from Uganda's backwoods, has turned into a virtuoso at international public relations. Like the late Sen. Joe McCarthy, he knows exactly what to say and when to say it to get maximum media exposure. Statements praising Hitler are sure to make the front page anywhere in the Western world, particularly if uttered by somebody black and dangerous and threatening. Having made his military coup, somewhat to his own surprise, Amin first tried to play a standard Uncle Tom role, comforting British business, talking about a dialogue with South Africa. When that did not pay off, he became The Bad Nigger, huffing, puffing, kicking out Israelis and Indians, threatening to execute an Englishman. Immediately he had the queen's ministers racing to and fro, making respectful noises, promising arms or at least spare parts, accommodating the exodus of 50,000 Ugandan Indians who had, up till then, not been acceptable in Britain even though they carried British passports.

What I am trying to say is that Idi Amin is not the Voice of Moscow. He is, in caricature, the worried voice of the West. We deserve him. So do the British who created him—and who also created the absurd caste society (white settlers on top, Indian traders in the middle, Africans in various layers at the bottom) of which he is the product. If you create a racist society, and then leave it to the "natives" to sort things out after you yourself have pulled your own chestnuts out of the fire, it seems a bit hypocritical to deplore the ensuing violence.

There has been a reign of terror in Uganda these past five years. Civil wars, bloody massacres, tribal showdowns verging on genocide, have not been scarce in other Third World countries either—and all have been gleefully noted by all those "grown-up" Western countries, such as the harmonious United States, or Germany, where there has been no genocide for the past thirty years. Is there a general, ominous trend behind the series of calamities in the Third World? Are they moving toward 1984 even quicker than we are?

In the case of Chile, it must be admitted

that the military junta has been cruelly efficient and systematic about uprooting the country's opposition. The Brazilian brand of military dictatorship, slightly milder, has noted a few successes too, and kept the lid on for twelve long years. But do even those prime examples of (mind you) Western-style dictatorships qualify as totalitarian? Does one see a total regimentation of minds, a marching torch-bearing, yelling crowd milling down Avenida O'Higgins in central Santiago, saluting, with glazed eyes, *El Caudillo* Pinochet? Pinochet would love that sort of a scene, we can be sure of that, but could he ever bring it about? There have been many mass movements built around a charismatic leader in the Third World, *Fidelismo* in Cuba being the outstanding and most successful example. But, in the absence of structure, ideology, and organization, they tend to wither away once the leader is gone.

**Y**ET A MASS MOVEMENT of some sort, a party organization reaching into the smallest villages, with the political commissars riding on camelback, paddling by canoe into the remote mangrove swamps, is probably exactly what the new states, the "young" countries need. It would be a necessary part of that "nation-building process" the liberals were so fond of talking about, before they met its concrete manifestation in the highly efficient party organization that managed to withstand U.S. might in Vietnam. Party organizations of this sort existed in the new countries up through independence. Then they disappeared. The onetime leaders became corrupt politicians and administrators, more interested in building up their own positions than in mobilizing the country.

In a few countries in the Third World there have been signs of something that to the untrained Western eye might look like totalitarian or Fascist-style mass movements. President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, formerly the Belgian Congo, modestly denies being God, but has done his best to replace Western influences, religious and otherwise, by his own image, through a nationwide "authenticity" campaign designed to restore the national identity and make himself the center of the people's worshipful attention. Youth movements have arisen in countries such as Malawi, where a kind of "Banda-Jugend" is trying to enforce Life President Kamuzu Banda's moralistic principles by weeding out "intellectuals," harassing Jehovah's Witnesses for their refusal to recognize any government of the





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world, and attacking girls in the streets for wearing miniskirts and wigs.

What is striking is how few and how feeble these attempts really are, and how often they serve to draw attention from the real issues of economic dominance and exploitation. In the desperately poor landlocked republic of Chad, the biggest problem during the long years of French colonialism was the enforced cultivation of cheap cotton for the European market, with what at times amounted to slave labor.

However, President Tombalbaye, who has since, luckily, been overthrown and killed by his army, decided that his main task was to launch his own "authenticity" campaign, forcing his fellow citizens to go through painful tribal initiation ceremonies, including crawling on their bellies over termite-infested ground, all in the name of a return to African tradition. French locals were often harassed and put in jail, but at no point did Tombalbaye challenge that other tradition in Chad, the continued economic dependence on France and the supposed need for the country to keep on producing cheap cotton for Europe with underpaid labor.

President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, one of the few intellectuals in power anywhere in the world, keeps saying that the Third World is in a perpetual emergency, reminiscent of the war era in Europe. Yet one would be hard put to find any corresponding sense of urgency or vigilance in most of the new countries. Suspicious-looking foreigners travel in and out with impunity. The defense establishment typically relies on officers from the same colonial power that might be the chief enemy. There is serious and increasing dislocation of the economies, much of it due to continuing economic links with the old colonial power; but, apart from occasional outbursts in the press against "imperialism," and the odd deportation of some hapless European now and then, it is as if the often publicized, ongoing "war" against underdevelopment, exploitation, and white power had never really gotten off the ground.

### The inefficient police state

**I**T IS PROBABLY TRUE that if you want to build a strong state, totalitarian or otherwise, you will first have to industrialize. A countrywide party organization, preferably built up alongside a liberation army, as in China or Vietnam, could get the country organized and also serve as the necessary eyes and ears of the ruling group, but

few of the governments in the Third World have arisen out of that kind of warlike situation, and few of the existing governments seem ready to build up any organization whatsoever. There is also the problem of sheer logistics. Is it at all possible to build an efficient police state in an underdeveloped country?

How do you organize efficient telephone surveillance in a country where the entire telephone network breaks down after heavy rains? Not even Chile, with the highest literacy rate on the Latin American continent, can effectively censor the mail. On the African continent, only South Africa and Rhodesia, with an industrial base and higher education available at least to the ruling white minorities, have managed to build a police state worthy of the name.

It could be argued that few Third World countries really need a police state. The strategies where troublesome opposition people could be found are rather thin and could be kept under watch by sending a few agents to the local bars and telling them to keep their eyes open. African and Latin Third World governments—and not only the dictatorial ones—tend to censor the press. This would seem a superfluous gesture, since so few people can read, but it is precisely within the small group of the educated elite that the current rulers fear political competition.

Again, precisely because the elite is so small, harsh police-state methods, detention and killings, tend to be self-defeating since the people who are in jail today would be needed as experts for tomorrow's new government. In countries where the members of the elite are more or less closely related through family or *compadre* relations, even the revolutionaries typically are the sons and daughters of the very oligarchs they are rebelling against. It is rather as if most of the political detainees in the Third World were Patricia Hearsts.

There is a real police state in many of the Third World countries, but not the kind the Western liberal mind usually thinks of. There are thousands of poor, illiterate citizens rotting away in jail, waiting for years before their cases even get heard in court and they are officially sentenced. Peruvian peasants tend to be locked up and put away for decades as a result of long, drawn-out cases over land and land invasions. In Africa jails have been overflowing with first offenders, who are picked up on the street by energetic policemen, thrown into jail, and left there to wait, sometimes years. Nobody particularly bothers about them, not even Amnesty International, probably because the Western liberals are so





essed by those impeccable wigs in those so  
y Anglo-Saxon courtrooms.

The new governments, the new elites in the  
rd World, have so far not had to face the  
r or the hungry in their own countries.  
Fascist-style defense mechanism has not  
n developed, a class war has not yet shown  
lf. Chile is an exception. As the workers  
the unemployed slum dwellers were being  
anized into a power of their own under  
nd, to a certain extent, in spite of—the  
nde government, the economic powers  
be replied blindly, employing crude po-  
-state methods, but, without the organized  
s support that Hitler contrived to get, these  
fell short of Fascism.

**N**EXT TIME YOU PEER at those maps  
in *Time* magazine which purport to  
show the spreading influence of So-  
viet or Chinese-style Communism in  
developing world, it may be good to recall  
money is not immediately translatable in-  
fluence; arms deliveries do not necessarily  
y political opinion in entire countries. The  
sians and the Chinese have learned this  
hard way. During the civil war against  
essionist Biafra, Nigeria received a consid-  
erable amount of Soviet arms and felt gen-  
ly much friendlier toward Moscow than  
ard London and Washington, where there  
obvious vacillation over which side to  
. One would be hard put to claim that So-  
arms have meant any marked Soviet in-  
nce in Nigeria, where the man in the street  
inues to be enthusiastically capitalist and  
re even leading members of the local pro-  
munist organizations have tended to use  
good hard currency they received from  
cow for their own business endeavors.

is not so easy to build up a disciplined  
nization of any kind in today's Third  
ld countries in their present state of total  
much less so to build an effectively func-  
ng state. The need is there to build an  
enetrable, incorruptible organization—a  
ng state that could withstand the pressure  
multinational corporations, big-power in-  
ts, and even more so the greedy wishes  
e members of the emerging middle class,  
led and safeguarded by their very posi-  
as state-subsidized members of the new  
of civil servants. But there is a strong  
in very few of the world's emerging coun-  
There is a lot of bureaucracy, yes, and a  
f featherbedding, since the state contin-  
o be the biggest employer in most Third  
d countries, and there must be jobs for  
ousins and for those once marginal groups

and regions that were brought under the um-  
brella of the state through, say, military coups.  
Yet the sheer size of the bureaucracy makes  
it even easier to buy off individual civil ser-  
vants, corrupt any ministers and officers who  
might want to sell Coca-Cola, or run-down in-  
dustrial machinery, or drugs which have been  
outlawed in more "civilized" nations.

It is ludicrous to picture a strong, sinister  
"state" running the affairs of the Third World  
nations and even more so to imagine that  
there is a coordinated, well-run totalitarian  
conspiracy aiming at extinguishing freedom,  
and sabotaging the world economic system.  
The industrialized West has managed to get a  
lot of political mileage out of the oil crisis.  
For a few years it has actually looked as if the  
Third World was becoming a strong and  
united force which would have to be respect-  
ed. Today even OPEC may be crumbling, torn  
between the widely disparate objectives of its  
members, who all want economic development  
on terms that only the industrialized West can  
help out with. If for a few years the Third  
World has been exercising Oil Power, the in-  
dustrialized world, notably the United States,  
has all the time been wielding the even strong-  
er weapons of Food Power, Fertilizer Power,  
and Manufactured Goods Power.

The Third World is not much of a threat, I  
am afraid, and I feel deeply distressed by this  
fact. Attacking the idea of Zionism through  
U.N. resolutions or even through occasional  
hijackings and airport massacres is not the  
result of some Machiavellian, worldwide, to-  
talitarian conspiracy. What has happened in  
Munich, at Lod Airport, in Cairo, and Bang-  
kok over the past few years is the outcome  
of terrible frustration and weakness in Third  
World nations and states, some of which, like  
Palestine, are so weak that they do not even  
exist. Terrorism—which has claimed fewer  
lives in a decade than one day of traditional,  
regular warfare—is the poor man's, the poor  
country's last desperate attempt at stopping  
the big powers and their much more efficient  
and brutal methods of imposing their will.

It cannot be desirable that the Third World  
should be like this, so disorganized and poor.  
If we are told that the Third World is becom-  
ing an actual threat to our well-nourished  
Western selves, then it is not only a lie but  
appears to be part of a general preparedness  
campaign to clamp down on precisely those  
efforts the Third World is making to liberate  
itself.

Why is the ugly old elephant screaming, be-  
ing stepped on by the ant? Is it not because  
he is trying to justify his own next, crushing  
step? □

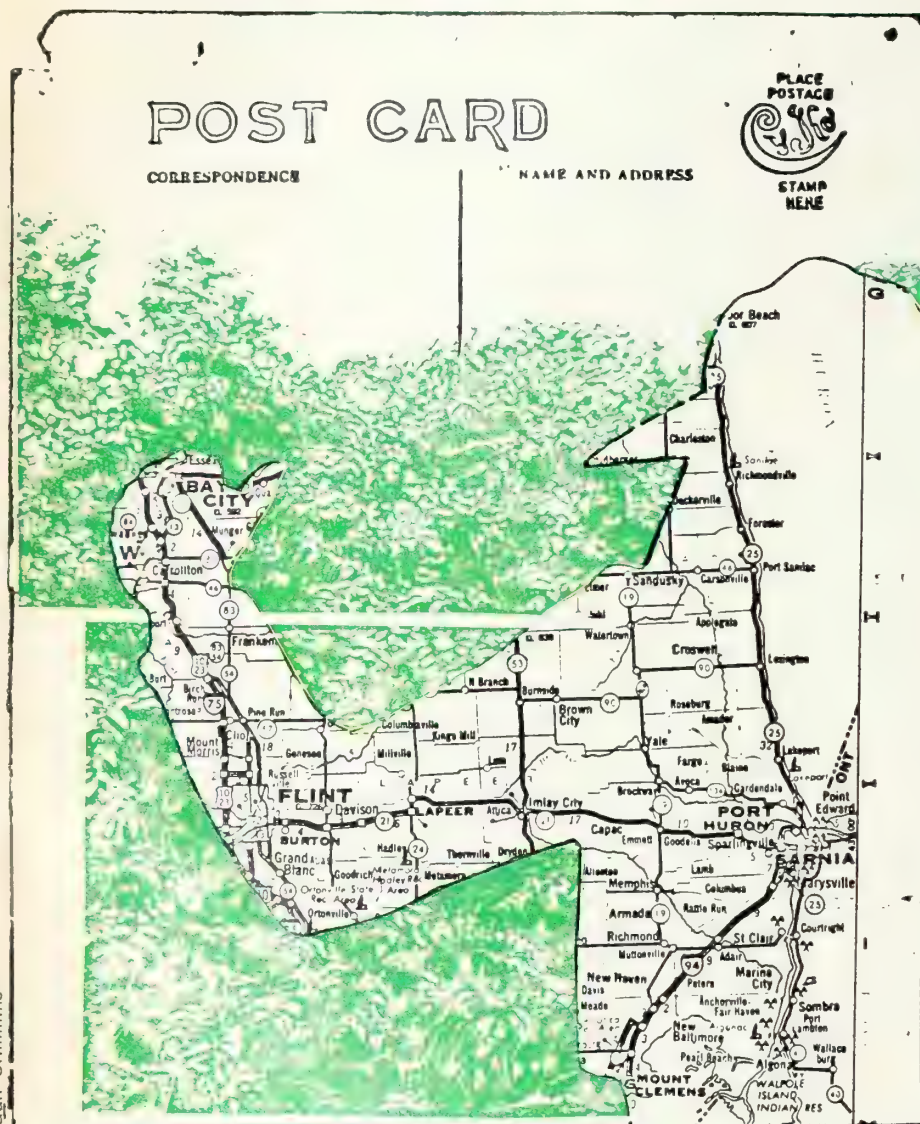
**"Terrorism is  
the poor man's,  
the poor coun-  
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perate attempt  
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and brutal  
methods of  
imposing  
their will."**



HARPER'S  
SEPTEMBER 1976



# THE IDEAL



# ADDRESS

A story by Richard Stern

**E**VERYBODY CLOSE TO Winnie's center was in motion.

Fred, no kid anymore, was doing what he'd been doing for three years, crisscrossing the country, following—he told her in collect calls from Phoenix or Fargo—"leads." That is, friends, often met the week before, who had houses to build, acres to plant, jobs to offer, places to crash. Then it was arrival, and, weeks, or days—twice, *hours*—later, departure. For every amical ointment, a fly. "The guy lies around all day getting wasted. Good drugs is all there is here, ma. A bad scene." Failure of mission reported to Chicago, Fred would be on the road again, thumb cocked, life's accumulation in his rucksack, the Ideal Address summoning him from a few miles, a few states away. "I'm down to twelve bucks. But I don't want anything, ma. This low, I'll have to stick somewhere."

Twenty-four. At twenty-four, Winnie had two children and two degrees, and was supporting four people selling lots in the South Side of Chicago. Supportee Number Four was the Greater Frederick rounding the last turn of his eight-year doctorate. The Great One had passed to his namesake blond charm, the gift of living off women, and—might as well face it—a deep tract of sheer dumbness, a power of self-delusion from which contempt or dislike washed easily. (The Fredericks couldn't be snubbed.) "Stick anywhere, Freddy. Build up a stake before you move on. You have to eat lots of dirt before flowers bloom in your face. The plane offers no perfect situations."

"I stuck New York, ma."

Five months in the *Newsweek* morgue, long enough—to the day—to qualify for battered New York's unemployment compensation. Eighty dollars a week, which, with his girl's salary, gave him the life of not Riley but Oblomov. An Oblomov who discovered the Off-Track Betting parlors. And won. Spectacularly. Twenty-three thousand dollars, fourteen on one daily double. "You know the way accountants look at a sheet of figures and see the shape of corporations. Ma, I look at those dope sheets and see the race."

Close to six-and-a-half feet, 190 pounds, the green eyes glistening with this *Dummheit*. Yet the pudding had proved out: twenty-three thousand. "Freddy, now it's time to take the journalism course. Go up to Columbia."

"It's not the time for that, ma."

"Look, Fred, it never hurts for anyone to talk to a counselor. Why not spend a few bucks and get your head cleared? Find out what you're best doing, why you're not doing it."

"But I am doing it."

She sensed he was going to stick the money



a hole, not report it to the IRS. "Fred, the six men are everywhere. They get reports from the OTB every day. Don't conceal anything. Every dollar lights up those computers in Virginia. Don't wiggle."

Was she trying to subdue the divinity of idleness, she who'd burnt offerings to its opposite number since she was nineteen? All those mortgages and leases smoking in the golden nostrils.

Fred went to Aqueduct; he'd never seen the back itself before. The actuality needled his balloon. "All these bums in funny hats coming up to *me* for tips. I'm standing around in my nylon sweatshirt, and they're asking *me*." (It was another sliver of his pride that no one in New York dressed as badly as he did. He was like the man in Chekhov identified as "Lubov, the one who lost his galoshes at the Balanoffs'.")

**A** MONTH LATER, in a manner hidden from and hardly credible to her, Freddy was down to seven thousand dollars, six of which he put into a mutual fund. "I've been studying the Street, ma." (He'd watched *Wall Street Report* on the educational channel.) "What baffles people?"

With the seventh thousand, he "cleared the post," left a girl, an apartment (the lease had two months to go), and a phone bill which Winnie, his permanent address, paid, and headed—*ailed* was a better verb for Fred—west. "I might have a day with you in Chicago, ma. But Jack's in a hurry. He's got a pad in Sonoma County, he says there are millions of jobs in the wineries. And it's more beautiful than the south of France."

He did stop for a day, but she was just moving in with Tom. Fred never liked her boyfriends, and he missed the old apartment; so and his two pals (the third had been picked up in Ohio, a Marx-bearded dreamer who ate one of Tom's plants) stayed only a night. "There's no place in Chicago for me anymore, ma."

"It's a big city, Fred. You can go down to Hyde Park with dad."

"Dad doesn't see where I'm at."

Fourteen inches shorter, plain and dumpy as a muffin next to this green-eyed giant, Winnie couldn't bring herself to ask where he was. He was so hugely *there*. Besides, she had all she could handle now with Tommy.

The reason she'd moved in with him after twelve years in her own place was his desperation. A month before, he'd been "dumped" by an analyst, and had imploded, collapsed. He couldn't get out of bed. The black pearl eyes which just sat out on his gold cheeks, dropped down them. "Why did he do it to me,

Winnie? What did I do wrong? Was it the writing? He knew I was writing the book."

Tom was finishing a doctorate, writing on the nature of evidence in psychoanalysis. One session recorded his own interpretation of fifteen analytic sessions and was to be followed by Dr. Culp's notes on the same sessions. It would be a unique document, real material for students of the profession. But Culp slammed the door. The impassive, lunar face which had dominated Tommy's dreams for two years burned with rage. While Tom was on the couch, Culp called Dr. Fried and told him he thought it was time to turn Mr. Hiyashi over to him. Tom fainted, was revived, staggered up the hall, and found two doctors and three cops—"with guns, Win."

Would he sign himself in, or did he prefer to be committed by Culp? "You were signaling you wanted to be hospitalized," Culp said when he finally agreed to talk to Tom.

**W**INIFRED GOT TOM OUT. She went to Professor Klugerman, he found someone to sign for Tom, and then he gave her the word on Culp: Chicago was littered with his wrecks; he'd been a promising young man, but his own problems had ruined him; he was okay when the transference was rosy; when it got rough, he abandoned ship, hospitalized the patients, and told them he couldn't work with patients who'd been hospitalized. Psychoanalysis is the best-protected fortress in the world: its stones are invisible. Even with a Klugerman on one's side, a malpractice suit was next to impossible.

Anyway, Tom was too low to think of litigation. For two years, all the feeling in the world had been held in by the four walls of Culp's office. Now he'd never see him again. "Analysis may not have the power to cure, but it sure has the power to hurt," he said, tears dropping on the gold cheek-flesh. "I can't think of anything else, Win." Even now, two months after Winnie had moved in, five weeks after he'd started with Dr. Fried, Tom's head was a Culp museum. He drove to Winnetka, parked near Culp's house, stared at his wife and children, took pictures of the garden, the cars. "Win, yesterday I wanted to steal his bag of garbage. A big plastic sack of garbage, and I wanted it."

"Oh, Tommy."

"Maybe because I was his garbage. And I gave him all mine. I gave him all the muck in my head, and he told me to get out. He's supposed to take it. An analyst is an incinerator plant—no, a recycling plant. But he cycled me out. How would you feel, Win?"

"I know, Tommy, I know," stroking him, the handsome little blacktop head, the beautiful lit-

**"Go to Jesus.  
Or Buddha.  
Or Jane  
Austen.  
George Eliot.  
Did they squat  
around,  
asking who  
they were?"**

*Richard Stern is the author of several novels, the most recent of which is Other Men's Daughters.*



Richard Stern  
THE IDEAL  
ADDRESS

tle shoulders. She knew a little anyway. She'd been dumped as well, and not by a passing stranger. The Greater Frederick had taken his degree, acknowledged "its essential ingredient, my wife," and four years later, just starting to make enough money so she could stop making it and concentrate on her poetry, he discovered that "everything on this earth has a term," they "had had the best of marriage, the worst was coming," it was "time to think of 'fresh fields and pastures new,' old Win."

Of course he'd been plowing the new pasture for a year. Stroking Tom, Winnie remembered her own obsession with Rosanne, looking her up, what a shock, a scrawny kid, rearless, breastless, with a nose that hooked wickedly towards her teeth. A classic Frederickan delusion. (Line up, Rosanne).

Eight years, they lived five blocks apart. So the move to Tommy's had the relief of that separation as well. And maybe some of the relief of Freddy's moving: moving for its own sake, though she believed what she'd quoted at him from Donne, "there is motion also in corruption."

"Corrupt, ma?"

"No, Freddy, it's just that motion isn't necessarily healthy."

"You could sell it to Weight Watchers: I always lose five or six pounds a trip. You should try it for that alone, ma."

She didn't need that. Her weight was what she had. "Lose enough, you can fit in an envelope, mail yourself to yourself. You'd never catch up. Ride round the earth for the price of a stamp. Need the dime?"

"You're some punkins, ma." Harshness slid off him. (He always regained his five pounds.)

The move did occupy her, and it blurred some of Tom's shock and the brevity of Freddy's stay, and then Nora's hysterectomy, which came ten days after Freddy left.

Win had "never been close" to Nora was what she told friends, what she thought, but of course that was too easy, Nora had been in her belly and at her breast, she'd loved her wildly, as she'd loved Freddy. But when Great Frederick took off, Nora, though she stayed with her mother, took off, too. Eight years old, and Winifred would see the green eyes flashing chill at her, the unvoiced indictment: "You let what counted get away. You weren't good enough to hold it. Are you what I have to be? Is that what a girl is? Someone Left?"

But over the phone, Nora wept, she was never going to have her own child, and Winnie took off for Denver and held Nora's blond, Freddian head on her breasts, she mustn't worry, she and Francis could adopt ten babies, it was the right thing to do in this 1970s world; the hysterectomy

was a sign her system would have trouble with babies, she would have all the joy—and almost all the difficulties—of children, the genetic part was insignificant.

She stayed two weeks, doing chores, keeping cheerful, even had the first good talks of her life with Nora, it looked as if at last they would be friends. But toward the end the new grievance must have revived the old. Win looked up to the green eyes flaming at her. "You don't know your own nature, momma."

"Maybe I'd run away from myself if I did."

"No. If you knew where you were, what you are, things wouldn't happen to you all the time. You'd happen to them." Nora, white as a bathtub, with only the large green circles for color.

"I'm not much on all this knowing thyself. That's what our Fredericks are after, or say they are. 'Where's that Great Phone Book in the Sky with my number in it?' What's the point, Nora? Look at Tom." Nora never wanted to look at Tom. "Ten years on the *S. S. Couch* and what's his America? Shipwreck! 'I'm too busy for that,' as Pat Nixon told Gloria Steinem. Right on. And if you want better authority for burying the self, go to Jesus. Or Buddha. Or Jane Austen. George Eliot. Did they squa around, asking who they were?" But Nora would write no book, would adopt no children. "I'm just dodging, Nora. You're right."

It was time to go. Francis took her to the airport. "I can be back in hours if you need me, Francis."

"You're a brick, Win." Endless, vague, unbricklike Francis.

**S**OLID, MAYBE DUMPY, WINNIE, yes, a bit of a brick; on her own, had put the two children through lab school, college, had moved more South Side noncommercial real estate than anyone in the city, could have had her own firm, been a rich woman if she hadn't hated being a boss (firing people, fighting the IRS). She was a brick and then some, a lot of bricks, and some windows, doors, and not a bad interior, ask Tom, ask a few discriminating human beings.

But in need of tuck-pointing, chimney-work Mornings, waking up next to Tom (unless he was out casing Culp's breakfast), her head was full of nutty projects: she'd form an Effluvia Corporation, market the leavings of the great (Picasso's shaved hairs, Elizabeth Taylor's sweat, a bottled ounce for eighty bucks); she'd discover Jesus's *Autobiography*: "The Word first? No. Words come from throats. He was born in almost the usual way. In a backwater town."

Breakfast up here was nice. Tom's place was



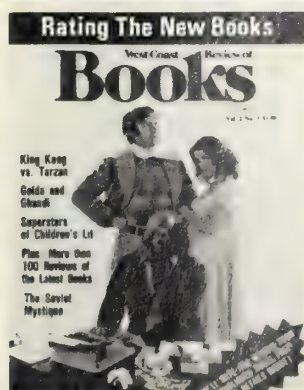
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Richard Stern  
THE IDEAL  
ADDRESS

across the street from Wrigley Field, and in the morning, or on days there was no ball game, the neighborhood felt as if it had fallen out of the present tense. The streets zoomed up to the great oval and died; the silence was spectral. There were lots of Koreans and Japanese around—they'd come from California after World War II. The small business streets had a special feel, old ladies bowing to each other, the *kanji* script on the hardware and grocery stores suggesting intense messages from over the clouds. Shinto shrines and rock gardens behind standard Chicago threeflats.

Ball-game days, the morning silence thickened toward noise, vendors wheeled their carts, the pennant men and car parkers warmed their throats for the crowd, which dribbled and then poured in under the windows. What was that crazy mass they celebrated in the oval, the little white grail pounded and pitched?

She sat in Tommy's "greenhouse" room, doing her accounts, or reading poetry, or just dreaming of something happening, something working, Freddy settling in, Nora taking care of a baby (knowing what feelings you just couldn't allow yourself, feeling the lovely depth of a total dependence), Tom shifting the hump of trouble from Culp to Fried.

*A stillness in others. So that her own motion would count.*

She didn't want ease, she was even tired of not being tired, of trouble washing too easily out of her system. (Inside she was brick.)

She wasn't ready to hit the road. (What road was there?) Down the street was far enough.

*... Green Chill upon the Heat  
So ominous did pass  
We barred the Windows and the Doors  
As from an Emerald Ghost—*

That childless lady in white who never left Amherst.

*The Doom's Electric Moccasin ...  
The Blond Assassin passes on ...  
imperceptibly ... lapsed away*

For Emily D., the motion of the world was sinister.

Poems didn't do the trick today. They handled too much, stood for too much. (As the accounts stood for too little: Illinois Bell Tel., Consolidated Ed.)

The oval burst. Home run.

She'd left home, but not arrived. Hidden in Tom's insectless, birdless, snakeless jungle, so much less jungle than his mind. Or hers.

"Born? In the usual way. Not knowing. Swaddled, but naked, knowing, but *what?* Daughter, mother, but alone. Without Ideal Address." □

# VERSE

by Naomi Lazard

## RE ACCEPTING YOU

We are very pleased with your response to our advertisement. The form you found in which to couch your reply is original and attractive.

It caught our attention immediately. The fact that you did not wait, but answered at once, is also in your favor. This means you are a decisive person, and this is the type we are looking for. So many people, these days, are trapped in indecision. We agree profoundly with everything you have said. More than anything we agree with the way you have said it.

You seem to have understood that the person we need must be humorous. That, we assure you, is a prime factor. You have told us a great deal about yourself, and the telling was brief. This too is a virtue. We like it. Lastly, you appear not to have become bitter from your experience. This we find extraordinary.

At this point we would like to meet you. You are invited to come here for an evening we have arranged. Everyone to whom we have written favorable answers such as this one will be here. You will come at your own expense. The trip will be worth the trouble. The party, as long as it lasts, will be fun. If things don't work out as you hope you will not be reimbursed, but you will be placed on our mailing list.



## ORDINANCE ON EXISTENCE

This card certifies the following:  
your file was processed,  
found satisfactory, the number  
of counts against you  
counterbalanced by favorable ones.

A few words regarding your card:  
it is the product of years  
of intense survey, research  
requiring judgments concerning  
data on the entire population.  
Despite the many obstacles  
we forged ahead; now we take pride  
in our achievement. This card  
eliminates waste and effort.  
Things will go more smoothly for you;  
there will be less chance of delay  
caused by mishaps, forgetfulness  
or misunderstanding.  
No other form of identification  
will ever be needed.  
Those to whom you show this card  
will know you exist  
without further confirmation.

Notice:

Our experts have devised a system  
unlike any other. You do not have  
just another number here.

The small microprint on the reverse side  
contains enough information  
to satisfy the most severe questioner.

Everyone qualified  
will soon be equipped with the device  
to interpret the code.

Flash this card.  
It is all you need.

## ORDINANCE ON THE NEWS FROM THE FRONT

All the reports that have reached you  
are true. In that area known as the front  
no one sleeps anymore.  
According to a recent bulletin  
we know that infants are born there  
with their eyes open; chickens  
stagger in the dusty roads  
for lack of sleep. There is  
no escaping the disasters,  
nor is there any chance for a settlement.  
Nobody knows how it will all end.

## ORDINANCE ON LINING UP

A line will form to the right  
and one to the left. You must join  
one of them. After careful consideration,  
choose the line you are most attracted to;  
stand at the end of it.

Both lines are serpentine. However,  
if you look closely  
you will see subtle differences.  
The one to the right moves more quickly,  
the left line at a more leisurely pace,  
which may prove beneficial  
to certain dispositions.

Try to see where the lines go;  
this is your option.  
Everything possible is being done  
to protect your privileges.  
A factor to keep in mind:  
in joining the line to the right  
you will end life as a beggar.  
If you decide on the line to the left  
everything you believe will become nonsense.  
You will be spending  
a great deal of time on whichever one  
you choose. Choose wisely.  
No changing from one line to the other  
once you have joined.

Common sense  
will tell you that you will become  
an indispensable link  
in the line of your choice.

Good luck to you.

However, we are doing all we can  
to limit the conflict, and, if possible,  
to stop it. Our efforts to date  
have been successful. The war  
is contained in a small area, the front.

The rumor that this front is advancing  
is not true. It is common knowledge  
that the front is elsewhere,  
in another country.  
We are keeping it there,  
where it belongs.



## ORDINANCE AT THE LEVEL CROSSING

Jumping the track is forbidden;  
the penalty for offenders is death.  
You are permitted  
to live beside the track,  
work at your trade,  
take trips, raise your family—  
but always on this side.

It will not be considered an excuse  
that trains don't run here anymore.  
They used to run here  
and they may again.  
The Council is having a heated debate  
on whether to allow trains.  
All factors are being taken into consideration.  
The faction that definitely opposes  
trains running here again  
says the situation is dangerous enough  
at present. Actual trains  
will constitute an intolerable risk  
to life and property.  
Their argument is:  
under present conditions  
the danger is contained.  
The faction favoring trains  
proposes a modified run  
of no more than two a year.

The progress of this debate  
will be reported from time to time  
as we see fit.

## ORDINANCE ON ENROLLMENT

The group in process of being formed  
will be something you have always wanted  
to be a part of but never, heretofore,  
imagined possible. Its composition  
will be strictly regulated:  
only those who qualify will be admitted.  
All others will be rejected.  
For those of you who believe  
you may have the necessary attributes  
for entry into this group,  
an application can be picked up  
at our office. Answer the questions  
as honestly as you can. Good marks  
also given for imagination  
and resourcefulness. This group,  
as it is shaping up, promises  
to become a compelling force  
in our society.

If you fail  
to get into this group,  
another, larger group is also being formed  
for rejects from the first one.  
The second group will in no way  
be inferior to the first. It too  
has standards; they are high.  
In order for your application  
to permit entry into the second group,  
check the proper place.

In case the second group is filled  
before your application can be processed,  
or your qualifications fall short,  
do not be despondent. Our plans include  
the formation of a third group.  
All applicants who have failed  
to make it into the first or second groups  
will automatically qualify for the third.  
This is not to imply that standards  
for this section are not high.  
They are different.

We welcome you now  
to the group for which you will ultimately  
qualify. Whichever it is,  
we know you will have a creative  
and enriching experience.



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— and  
you thought  
we just made  
maps



# MISSING IN ACTION

by Josiah Bunting III



**Born on the Fourth of July**, by Ron Kovic. McGraw-Hill, \$7.95.

**W**E BEGIN WITH truisms: that, in a world of nation-states run by well-meaning blunders, self-aggrandizing tyros, political geniuses, crackpots, whomever, there will be war; always war, with interludes of rearmament and peace. If you wish for peace, prepare for war. Also: that those who make war think they do right. Also: that soldiers, particularly of the officer class, achieve promotion during war. Also: that the butchery of war requires that those who make and sustain war distance themselves, and those in whose behalf the war is waged, from its butchery. A certain fastidiousness of phrase and appellation, a buffering obscurantism of the language of tactics and strategy and diplomacy—these help rid the controlling brains of war's wounds, of the knowledge of bodies shattered and shredded, villages made ovens, families bereft. Thus also are solicited

diverse sundry old authentic texts, showing how the war shall vindicate the national honor, the national history.

When the war is over, it is not only old men who forget, but almost all men. Pain is hermetic; its memory vanishes. People sing, "I'll remember April"; they do not sing, "I'll remember Verdun."

World War I was the most monstrous barbarism ever perpetrated on this planet. And in the *Kriegsakademie* are still studied the Schlieffen Plan (whose cold, crazed author muttered on his deathbed, "Make the right wing strong"), Jutland, Gallipoli, Plan XVII, Tennenbergian double envelopments, and generals who, as Correlli Barnett once wrote, "admitted into their brains only neutral factors of calculation." Wilfred Owen is not studied:

*If in some smothering dreams you  
too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung  
him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing  
in his face...*

*If you could hear, at every jolt,  
the blood  
Come gurgling from the froth-  
corrupted lungs,  
Obscene as cancer, bitter as the  
cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on inno-  
cent tongues...*

Nor Sassoon:

*He stirred, shifting his body;  
then the pain  
Leapt like a prowling beast, and  
gripped and tore  
His groping dreams with grind-  
ing claws and fangs.*

I stay in touch with the military in this country. They don't think about Vietnam much, except idly, to reminisce. But there was a war for you. MacArthur said don't get involved. de Gaulle said don't get involved. General Shoup, commandant of the Marine Corps, said withdraw—but we knew better. I used to write, "We who are left will close ranks to continue the struggle to bring freedom to Vietnam." Wilfred Owen to his mother: "I don't even take the cigarette out of my mouth when I write 'deceased' over their names."

Bringing freedom was our second war aim. The first one had to do with standing up to Communist malignancy, if we were not to forfeit our reputation as a guarantor of certain small powers: the updated Truman Doctrine, perhaps earnestly discussed the night Arthur Schlesinger got thrown in the pool at Hickory Hill. Later there lurked in the mind of men the chimera of a "pitiful helpless giant" and finally, at Christmasbombingtime, taking our tea from Disraeli (1878, after the Berlin Congress), and Chamberlain (1938), "Peace with Honor."

And now the present preparation for the destruction of the human race, all undertaken with the most sterling and unimpeachable of motives. We have come a long way. We cannot get off the treadmill. Can we?

Bob Adelman



**R**ON KOVIC is on another treadmill—and he can't get off because his body is broken, cannot, from chest down, respond or feel. He written a fiery account of what war in Vietnam did to him during his second tour there, up along DMZ, where he served as a sergeant in the Marine infantry: *Born on the Fourth of July*. They got his life of birth before he got his morning. Let me now write the usual endless exhortation to all whose life politics and government: read this book. Read it on your way back from the Vineyard or Rehoboth—it's short—and have some Sassoon to follow. Flip through the thing; start reading about the enemy room and the bursting urine sacks the continents' catheters feed into in the hospital where the corpsmen talk about the Green Bay Packers while they give heart massage. Do I make you sick? The nausea will pass. Have a drink, and let me tell you about Ron Kovic's postbelly ailments, about what the war did to him.

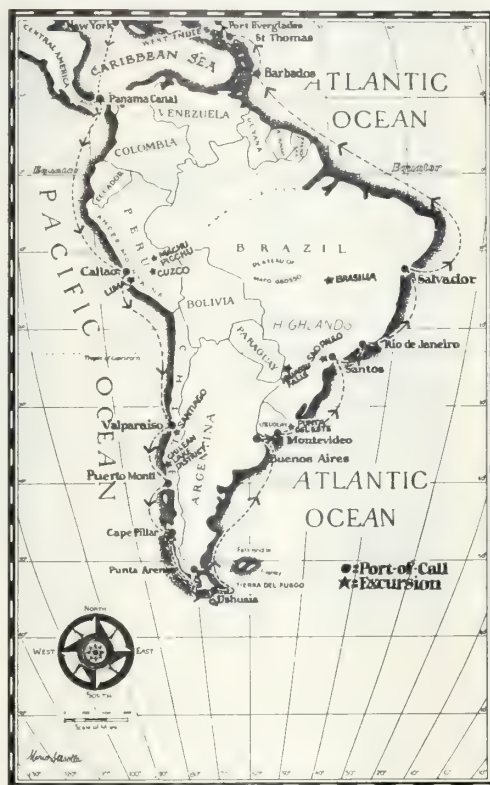
Catholic boy from Massapequa, Long Island, born 1946, taught that masturbation was sinful, adored Mike Mantle and John Kennedy, was a Marine—two of whom one day mounted the stage in the auditorium of Massapequa High School, impeccably slim, crisp, and earnest in dress and bubble-shined low-quartermaster shoes. Enlisted, became maggot at Fort Belvoir, was graduated, served tours, the latter cut short by flycatcher, in Vietnam.

Became a vegetable with a brain, now okay. Except that he cannot feel love, walk, run, control his bladder, dance, frolic, and would not be considered a filthy traitor by 90 percent of the adult citizenry of the United States.

*Born on the Fourth of July* is a personal chronicle of the national insanity. Lifted to a platform in his wheeled chair, between hellish people in VA hospitals, which, in Kovic's account resemble nothing so much as car washes and used-car lots, lifted to the dais, Kovic hears the American Legionnaires' panegyrics, their confident stupidities: "We have to win because of them," speakers say, indicating Kovic and other broken men near the ros-



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Kovic gets drunk, but his father fixes his catheter and builds a ramp to the back porch.

He moves about the continent unconsciously impelled by the notion that he can somehow restore himself somewhere else: in Mexico (the Village of the Sun, where shattered men foregather, meeting pimps, whores, and cabdrivers), in Las Cruces, Los Angeles, in airplanes, where, in his seat, he indulges in fantasy: no one knows when you're sitting down.

Finally he flings into the movement: Vietnam Veterans Against the War. In the most devastating passage in the book (which, incidentally, is too thickly padded with the familiar *longueurs* about Marine boot training and the boyhood that prepared Kovic for Parris Island), the author recounts his experience at the Republican National Convention in 1972. Having committed the outrage of crashing the convention, and the even more unforgivable sin of monopolizing Roger Mudd for two or three minutes of network "exposure," Kovic waves a Stop the War sign in the air. A law-and-order man seizes the placard, destroys it, and calls Kovic "a lousy Commie son of a bitch!" Kovic persists, interrupting Mr. Nixon's acceptance speech. A "short man" spits in his face. "Traitor!" he screams. Kovic: "What more was there left to do but go home? I sat in my chair shaking and began to cry."

By the waters of Leman one sat down and wept.

Edmund Wilson once wrote of "the inveterate and irrational instinct that impels human beings to go to war." The same instinct impels their acquiescence in the most idiotic explanations for why they are at war, makes them adventitiously accept the "justice" of the causes to which their nations have committed them, makes them, equally, determined to forget the war when it ends. And yet the murderous irrational instinct persists. Just last week I heard the stentorian monotone of the radio blurb-sayer for the film *Midway*: "So real you think you're in combat."

They're packing them in for that one. I wonder if there's a ramp for Kovic's wheeled chair?

Josiah Bunting, president of Briarcliff College in New York, is completing his third novel, *Under the Arch*.

# THE MYTH OF ICARUS



Harry Crosby



Josephine Rotch Bigelow

by Hugh Kenner

**Black Sun: The Brief Transit and Violent Eclipse of Harry Crosby,** by Geoffrey Wolff. Random House, \$12.95.

**H**ARRY CROSBY's best poem, "Photoheliograph," has fifty words, one of which is used forty-nine times. The arrangement is everything. To make your own copy, type the word *black*, lower-case, in five close parallel columns, each of them ten words high except for the middle one. In the middle column make the fifth word from the top not a lower-case *black* but an upper-case *SUN*.

If you use a black ribbon the word *SUN* will be black—not there except for its blackness—and mesmeric, leaping to the eye from amid a square field of black black black like the solar disc seen through a spaceship window, luminous. Yet the words set up a subdued machine-gun chatter which seems to be trying to say "black sun."

Like Harry's life, the poem is

compact and obsessed, reverses signals wherever attention is fixed and stops just short of making phrases sense. The most famous event of Harry Crosby's life, as he would have had us believe, most ecstatic, was his suicide gunshot in another man's Manhattan apartment, hand in hand with yet another man's dead bride. She was thirty-one, she twenty-two; year was 1929.

The previous year in Paris he published the "black sun" poem in a book called *Chariot of the Sun* issued by what soon became Black Sun Press. Harry designed books for the Black Sun Press, also bankrolled it. He was J. P. Morgan's nephew. And he held that death was the highest form of life, a notion Joyce had a character voice in *Ulysses*, where it is greeted with resonant "Bah."

Nothing in Harry said "bah" the extraordinary mixture of questions he died by: Oscar Wilde? "The only way to get rid of a terrible



on is to yield to it," T. S. Eliot's s on the whimper vs. the bang, H. Lawrence's seductive litany n "The Ladybird," which was ied into a Crosby notebook as y as 1923: "To her softly. Now are mine. In the dark you are e. But in the day you are not e, because I have no power in day. In the night, in the dark, in death, you are mine. And is forever."

Lawrence called Harry "a real t in the real world, not a strum- on a suburban piano." That was a letter; in public he was more rded, using words like "shabby" "clumsy" but conceding that ry's chaos was "alive." When y finally met, Harry found Law- ce no visionary at all, not like self, but an earthbound prig who shocked by the erotic techniques ry recommended and disliked sie Smith's "Empty Bed Blues" n Harry played him the record.

**H**ARRY CROSBY'S biogra- pher, Geoffrey Wolff, sums up this fiasco: "There was no way to o people from intruding on his ons, and only one way to es- them." Mr. Wolff, who has ished two novels, can't escape eed to hint at significance in way. Novels speak to us in the uage of events, and novelists in- the incidents they need. But a rapher has his events given to including some he'd not have en to invent and lacking some ould wish for, and his normal egy is to make a certain virtue eir miscellaneousness. "See," the well-behaved bio- hy seems to be saying, "there loose ends here, and antici- es, and things done for no appar- reason, and other things left ne no one can know why. There ch that is not even known. You think you miss the tidiness of vel. But you do not really miss truth is less shapely than fic- still it is more honest."

It that tone wouldn't do for a f Harry Crosby, whose honesty ed to be that of a well-driven , who strove to make of his life rdless statement and devoted energy to determining what anted it to say. It was to show

no loose ends, no anticlimaxes. It failed, in that after the spectacular climax everyone was bewildered ("You poor, damned, dumb bas- tard," said Archibald MacLeish).

Still, competent witnesses, among them MacLeish and Hemingway and Malcolm Cowley, testify to his power to fascinate, and now Mr. Wolff, having fallen under his sub- ject's considerable spell, has found himself accepting Harry as virtual collaborator. Before the book is twenty pages old the two of them are conniving to drape Significance round that final gunshot: "Death was a goal he ran toward full tilt. He was a poet of final stanzas, or so he liked to believe, and that last shot was no more than a punctuation point, a dot smaller than his finest fingernail, a hard period, full stop."

The sentences are Mr. Wolff's, but the quality of rhetoric—image climbing atop image—seems right for Harry. Mr. Wolff's training for this collaboration has included a stint with *Newsweek*, and his skill at composing pure newsmagazine is not the least pertinent of the skills he brings to his eminently fascinat- ing book. It was the ringing ham- mers of the gnomes of Lucespark, banging out the weekly cover, that, as long ago as Harry's first year in Paris, began to establish the rhy- thms by which portentousness is most reliably conjured out of numb fact. Thus the fact is that after Harry had killed the girl he waited two hours before he killed himself, while the rhetoric has it that he "simply lay beside Josephine trying to recol- lect himself, so that he would finally know, before he finally left, where he had been." Like most of Harry's poetry this makes large gestures while committing itself to nothing you can pin down. Neither quality is really out of place around Harry. A book-length *Time* cover—would that have been his apotheosis? He wouldn't have liked the proposal, but now that he has it he'd not deny that it fits.

As for Harry, he brings to the present collaboration a practiced hand with collaborators. There was always, in whatever he did, a second person: *folie à deux* was his mêt- ier. His wife Caresse was preeminent among these: born Mary Phelps Jacob, then Mrs. Richard Rogers Peabody until Harry swooped by



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and made her Mrs. Harry Grew Crosby, but known throughout to everyone as "Polly" until they decided on something alliterative and tried Charlotte, Clare, Clarisse, even Clytemnestra before settling on Caresse, in part because it made the upright of the Crosby Cross:

C  
A  
HARRY  
E  
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E

Caresse outlived him by some forty years, kept up the Black Sun Press, remarried, played hostess to Dali, Ernst, Henry Miller, tended to Harry's legend, and divided a huge Crosby archive between two American universities, Brown and Southern Illinois.

Then there was Josephine Rotch Bigelow, who shared his suicide pact. He had long had such a pact with Caresse, to be consummated on Halloween 1942, preferably by crashing an airplane ("down down down down Bang! the body is dead—up up up up Bang!!!! the Soul explodes into the Bed of Sun"), but the liaison with Josephine and the little revolver slipped in thirteen years ahead. Josephine was the Fire Princess, and "her syntax in her letters, like her character, was all bounce and flash, crazy."

There were more girls—the Sorcerer, the Queen of Peking, the Dark Princess—more than it seems worth counting. There were zanies like Goopy Pohlman ("bodyguard, wheelman and bad influence"). Above all there were gods: Joyce, Lawrence, MacLeish, Hemingway, Hart Crane, Pound—a Twenties pantheon.

**O**PPPOSITE THE MEMBERS of this cast of hundreds, taking them by ones, by twos, sometimes by dozens, Harry managed to play scene after bizarre scene. Then Harry or someone always seemed to write the scenes up, or some survivor filled Mr. Wolff's diligent ear. Mr. Wolff has a deft way with an anecdote. Even his orotund meditations are worth traversing for the sake of an embedded incident, and whole chap-

ters compact them together like blackout sketches.

Thus Frieda Lawrence liked the "Empty Bed Blues," even if D.H. didn't, and once played it so often at the Crosbys that D.H. smashed the record over her head. Harry then bought her not only a new copy of the record but a phonograph of her own to play it on, and that was the end of Lawrence's tolerance for Harry.

"Another day, going to look for zebra skins"—what a way to open a day, or a sentence!—Harry returned with the skeleton of a girl wrapped in a yellow raincoat. Her feet hit the stairs as he carried her to his library, where he hung her from a bookcase and settled himself to compose some apposite thoughts: "And who was this woman, princess or harlot, actress or nun young or old pretty and passionate or ugly and numb?" James Joyce later chanced to walk beneath her but said he wasn't superstitious about skeletons, though he did mind deaf-mutes.

Amid wealth of incident, though, the story line is simple, with those two revolver shots at the end to bewilder us. Not all of Mr. Wolff's riffs on the mighty Wurlitzer can persuade us that this adds up as Harry wanted it to—"Death: the hand that opens the door to our cage the home we instinctively fly to." Suicide, Mr. Wolff writes, "must have seemed a way, the only way, to authenticate his seriousness and his stature." (Thus Oscar Wilde, unable to write a tragedy, invited arrest in order to enact one.) There's something in that: Harry was a lightweight poet, capable of publishing such a line as "I do not envy the unfriended toad." A violent end lent him weight.

But there seems to be more to it, and Mr. Wolff also speaks of "the terminal consequences of the religion of art." This could mean that Harry took quotations literally—"I am dying, Egypt, dying"—and so died. But no, we're next told, "In his heart he lived a dangerous metaphor: Art is magic. The magician is god. Gods can do anything, and never mind the cost."

This is cant. Gods by definition incur no costs. The biographer's plight is understandable. He would make of Harry's death what Harry urges him to make of it, something

simple, sensuous, passionate, and something immensely difficult as well. Harry was as untrustworthy a poet in his end as in his writings, saying less than he meant to by saying too many things at once. Part of him aspired to the simple indifference of Yeats's Irish Airman, who died for no cause, for no kin, only on an impulse—"a lonely impulse of delight." Part of him aspired to a metaphysical statement he could never get straight ("aware of direction," wrote T.S. Eliot acutely "and ignorant of the destination"). And in part he was a very banal young man indeed, the spoiled rich boy with hovering parents and Boston on his back, and he wanted the commonest thing that suicides want to teach a few folk a lesson.

Consider, in this light, the trio of collaborators he managed to gather for that final scene: not Josephine whom he trusted it would release the Fire Princess into the Bed of Sun but the three annoyed people, excluded from the deed, who waited elsewhere for Harry to show up the December afternoon.

They were Caresse, his wife, who even after eight years' infidelities might still stand for a Boston value monogamy; J. P. Morgan, his uncle who stood for a second Boston value, fiscal probity; and Henrietta Marion Grew Crosby, his mother, pious, generous, dominating, a repeatedly betrayed wife who had made her son her intimate and his consolation (he wrote her, habitually, all about his mistresses).

Harry arranged for the three of them to be together in order to make an occasion of his delivering, to Uncle J.P., "an elegantly bound copy of his new book of poems, *Sleeping Together*." Then he didn't show up and their irritation grew. Eventually they were to learn that while they were taking tea and commenting on his fecklessness, Harry was (1) consulting Caresse, (2) giving the message to J.P., and (3) removing himself forever from the ken of his mother he didn't choose, the Boston nobody chooses. Despite the loudness of his message to cognoscenti, the messages to these three people claimed priority, and did not carry.

*Hugh Kenner teaches English at Johns Hopkins. His most recent book is A Homer in the World.*



# THE DANCING MASTER

by Francis Steegmuller

Diaghilev Observed by Critics in England and the United States, 1911-1929, by Nesta Macdonald. Dance Horizons, \$37.50.

**O**F SIXTY BALLETS danced by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes during the company's twenty years of life from 1909 to 1929, only six had their "world premieres" in London. Most had been known in Russia or were produced in Paris. But—a surprising fact—it was in London that the company gave more performances than in any other city, Paris included. London had a particular love for Russians. Speaking of the "stupendous, deafening applause" that greeted their great gala in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles in 1923, George Lifar describes it as "comparable only with our London triumphs." Diaghilev admitted into the company—and renamed—more English dancers than any other non-Russians: Vera Savina (Vera Clark, who married Leonide Massine), Lydia Sokolova (Hilda Munnings), Alicia Markova (Alice Marks), Ninette de Valois (Edris Stannus), Mortonova (Rusula Moreton), Anton Dolin (Patrick Healy-Kaye), and Hilda Drevicke were all English or Irish. London critics, some of whom had seen the ballets in Paris in 1909 and 1910, but most of them with little previous experience of great dancing, showed themselves apt not only in defining dance vocabulary but also in appreciating nuances of the art; they wrote voluminously in magazines, newspapers, and books about what they saw.

It is this reservoir of material about Diaghilev and his dancers that Nesta Macdonald has drawn on to compile a well-printed, intelligently organized and illustrated volume that



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is a veritable reference library in itself. For the great biography of Diaghilev that is yet to be written, it cannot be expected to be so rich a source as, say, the Stravinsky archives (if permission for the use of

those papers is ever granted by their several litigious owners and copyright holders); but it is essential nonetheless, providing numerous revealing or confirmatory details about the man, and about his productions as seen through British eyes. Mrs. Macdonald supplements the London story with a full account of the company's 1916-17 visits to the United States, which occurred during the period of personal and professional tension and drama following Diaghilev's break with Nijinsky, when Nijinsky was on the verge of the madness into which he soon sank. The genius of Diaghilev emerges vividly from all these pages.

**I**N LONDON, as elsewhere, the company had to weather repeated financial crises: and there were occasions when a critic, disheartened by what he saw as a trend, pronounced the entire enterprise artistically dead. In 1921 Ernest Newman, appalled by the "artistic inanity" of *The Sleeping Princess* (the ballet known today, after many refurbishings, as *The Sleeping Beauty*), wrote in the *Sunday Times*: "In common with some hundreds of other people, I was present on Wednesday at the Alhambra at the suicide of the Russian ballet. . . . It almost died last summer of cerebral anaemia, after having become intellectually bankrupt. It has cultivated inanity, off and on, for some years." *The Sleeping Princess* was indeed so great an artistic and financial failure that year as to imperil the company's entire London future; but after a lapse, and complex financial negotiations, the seasons resumed, and in 1926—the year of the London debut of *Les Noces*—found Lydia Lopokova, the ballerina who became Lady



Keynes, writing in *Vogue*: "The Diaghileff Ballet is a puzzle—how always it survives and comes up with new life when everyone is predicting its decline."

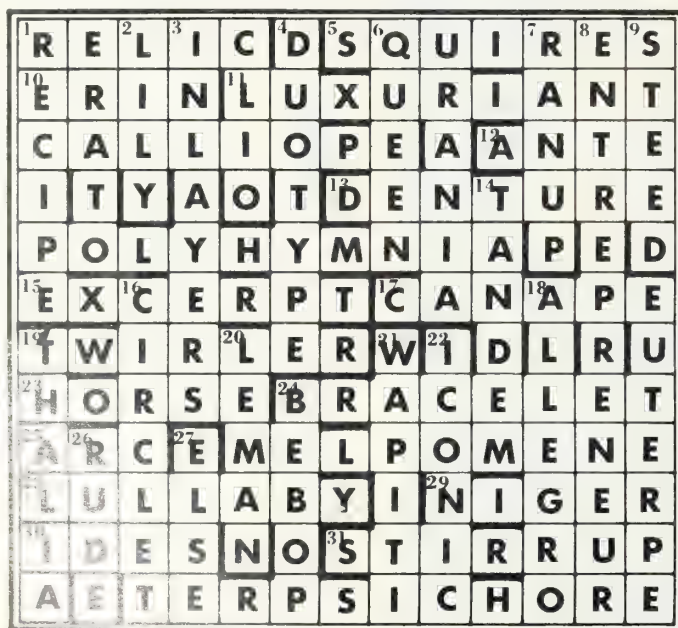
The son of a well-to-do, upper-class family, Diaghilev had shown phoenix tendencies from the beginning. In St. Petersburg in the 1890s, when he was twenty-odd, he took a degree in law but turned to music, hoping for a career as a singer. When he found that his voice pleased no one, he founded an art journal, in which he introduced Russians to some of the artistic achievements he had seen during travels in Western Europe. In 1899 he was appointed to a post in the Imperial Theaters, but "scandal and intrigues" brought about his dismissal "without leave to appeal"—he was forbidden ever again to hold an official appointment. Mrs. Macdonald reminds us of his subsequent activities: his exhibition of Russian historical portraits at St. Petersburg in 1905, which amazed the Russians, hitherto ignorant of their own riches in that domain; his exhibition of Russian art at the Salon d'Automne in Paris in 1906, which amazed the West, ignorant of artistic

Russia; and his seasons of Russian music in Paris in 1907 and 1908, when Glazunov, Rachmaninov, and Rimsky-Korsakov conducted their own works and revealed to Paris the music of Moussorgsky, Borodin, and Scriabin. The high point was Chaliapin's sensational singing in *Boris Godunov* at the Opéra. (For this production Diaghilev combed the antique shops of Russia, buying up old tunics, headdresses, and shawls, some of which have recently been rediscovered and are now on exhibition in New York at the Metropolitan Opera House.) Then, in 1909, when he returned to Paris with a mixed season of opera and ballet, the history of Russian ballet in the West began. The London debut came two years later.

Stravinsky has said that what Diaghilev most detested, throughout his career, was "banality, incompetence, and lack of *savoir-faire*." Nothing was ever allowed to go stale. Even the first ballets he brought to Paris and London—*Le Pavillon d'Armide*, *Prince Igor*, *Scheherazade*—were not the same productions that had been seen in St. Petersburg; they were refurbished for the West by Diaghilev's

decorators Benois, Bakst, and Roerich, and by his choreographer Fokine, though they were danced by many of the same St. Petersburg dancers. Pavlova, Karsavina, and Nijinsky were his first great stars. Pavlova left him to pursue an independent career; Karsavina was with him off and on until the end; in the young Nijinsky, notable when a student mainly for his leaps, he detected and brought out the hidden fire. As Lincoln Kirstein says, "He was never slow to prove that no one except Diaghilev was irreplaceable." When he felt in 1912, during rehearsals of *Daphnis and Chloe*, that Fokine's ideas showed him to be at a "creative standstill," he allowed him to resign, replacing him as choreographer, in another ballet derived from Greek myth, *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, by Nijinsky—with sensational results. (Not the least entertaining feature of *Diaghilev Observed* is the glimpse it affords of the varieties of British response when faced with the exotic. The *Faune's* erotic climax, for example, which had scandalized Paris, was regarded by one London critic as mere "suggestive by-play," and was calmly enjoyed by Queen Alexandra.)

When Nijinsky (his personal possession) outraged Diaghilev by marrying, dismissal was swift. That has usually been regarded as motivated solely by rage and chagrin; but did Diaghilev perhaps sense that with the relationship changed, in his new life, Nijinsky's genius would begin to fade? As in fact it did. Fokine was rehired—but soon came the discovery and grooming of his second successor, Massine, the first of whole "new generation" of choreographers, which included Nijinska and Balanchine. And so it went: always renewal. New librettists: Cocteau, Kessler, von Hofmannsthal, Sachverell Sitwell, Kochno. New, not Russian composers: Satie, Poulenc, Auric, Berners. Stage settings by the painters of the School of Paris: Picasso, Braque, Derain, Matisse.



### Solution to the August Puzzle

### Notes for "Amusement Park"

The unclued lights were the nine muses: Thalia, Euterpe, Calliope, Terpsichore, Urania, Polyhymnia, Erato, Clio, and Melpomene.

Across: 1. (recon)iler (reversal); 5. s.(section)-quires; 10. (lett)erin(g); 11. lu(mp)-xu(r.)iant; 12. homonym, auntie; 13. anagram; 15. exce(r.)pt; 17. hidden; 19. anagram of "writer" around "L"; 23. hoarse (homonym); 24. brace-let; 25. a R.C.; 28. Y(ball)ul(e) (reversal); 29. anagram, flow-er (pun definition); 30. Ides(t); 31. purr-its (reversal). Down: 1. Rx means recipe (anagram); 2. lil(anagram)-Y.(M.C.A.); 3. in-layers; 4. anagram; 6. two meanings; 7. ran-up (meaning "each," as in "the score was one up"); 8. anagram; 9. de(e)ts (reversal); 14. "Met" (reversal), around "and"; 16. circle-t; 18. all-e-g.-or (reversal); 20. (e)namel (reversal); 21. it-l-paw (reversal); 22. IC-on-IC; 24. be-bop; 26. (p)rude; 27. anagram.

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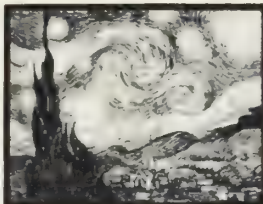
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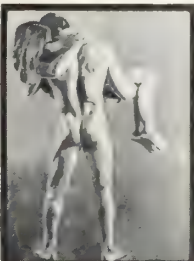
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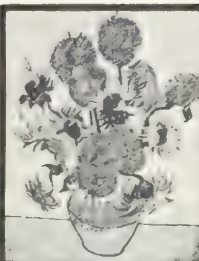
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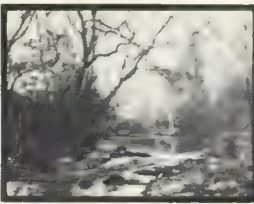
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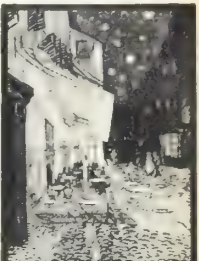
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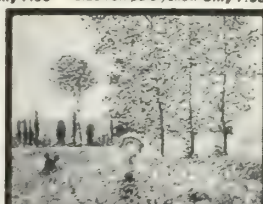
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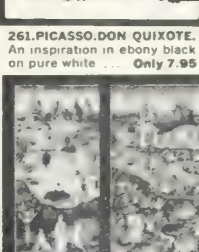
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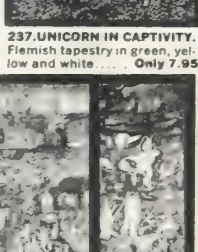
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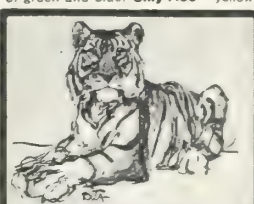
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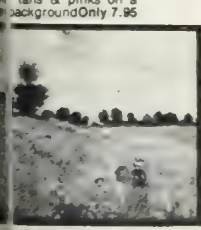
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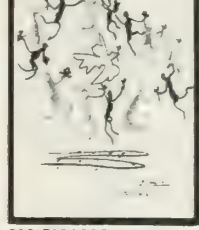
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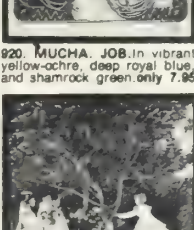
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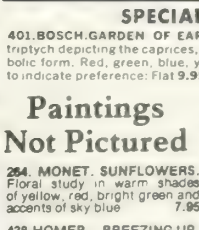
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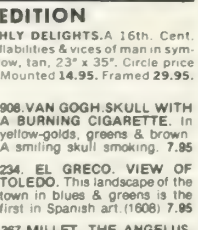
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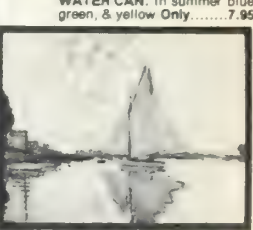
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With European travel impossible because of the war, Diaghilev was forced to accept an offer from the Metropolitan Opera Company; and Otto Kahn, the Metropolitan's Maecenas and guarantor of the venture, insisted that Nijinsky be part of the troupe. It took some time for the influence of highly placed persons to secure Nijinsky's release from internment as an enemy alien in Budapest, and it was only after the company had already danced in New York at the Century Theatre, toured as far west as St. Paul, and begun a new series of appearances at the Metropolitan itself, that he finally arrived in Manhattan in early April, 1916, with his wife, Romola, and their child. "Diaghilev," Mrs. MacDonald tells us, "was prepared to make a new, working relationship, and treated Romola with great courtesy. . . . The strain must have been considerable, and gave rise to magnified clashes over the smallest point. As for Nijinsky, though he owed everything to Diaghilev, who had presented him to Europe and raised him almost to the status of a god—certainly, *Le Dieu de la Danse*—he was replete with human failings, and had developed touchy pride, a mercenary attitude to his own performances, and ingratitude to an irrational degree."

Trouble began immediately. In newspaper interviews Nijinsky claimed that Diaghilev owed him \$80,000 for past salary, and refused to dance at the Metropolitan unless some of that was forthcoming and unless for new appearances he was given "the same pay as Caruso." The Metropolitan chafed at the delay.\* Finally Otto Kahn bridged the gap with gold from his own pocket, and Nijinsky danced triumphantly—but, having arrived late, less often than had been announced: the Metropolitan's subscribers never got to see him at all, his few performances having been "reserved as bait for open nights." There was much resentment. Diaghilev, out of his element, detesting American ways, and tormented by both Nijinskys, was

called in the newspapers "the Difficult," and held responsible for every hitch. "The upshot of the rows was that in July [1916] Otto Kahn invited Nijinsky to be the Director of the company on a return visit, and the condition was made that Diaghilev—and his closest collaborators—were not to accompany it."

Already, the critic for *Musical America*—and Lydia Sokolova, too—had detected ominous heaviness and sadness in Nijinsky's dancing and deportment; and although the next American season, with him in charge, brought favorable notices for *Til Eulenspiegel*—in Kirstein's words, "the single ballet performed by his company which Diaghilev neither saw nor superintended"—it was marked by chaos. Nijinsky began to manifest the symptoms soon to be diagnosed as incipient schizophrenia. And as for the company: "This season," wrote S. L. Grigoriev, Diaghilev's *régisseur*, "... compromised our reputation so gravely that the Diaghilev ballet was never able to appear in America again."

**D**IAGHILEV'S MAGNETISM and conspicuous genius gave him immense authority and surrounded him with eager collaborators. Among the gifted with whom alliance might have been mutually profitable, only the intractable Gordon Craig seems to have resolutely turned his back, switching off the lights when Diaghilev arrived late and talking loudly during a London demonstration of Craig's model stage and system of moving screens, and subsequently writing in *The Mask* that the Russian ballet's only good ideas were stolen from Isadora Duncan and himself. To the dancers and the rest of the company Diaghilev was *pater familias*, by turns caressing, cajoling, flattering, cold, crushing, angry: always tyrannical. His word was to be obeyed, and could fructify. Cocteau claimed that his entire subsequent career was changed by Diaghilev's command: "*Etonne-moi.*" "I was quick to realize that one doesn't astound Diaghilev in a week or two. From that moment I decided to die and be born again. The labor was long and agonizing. That break with spiritual frivolity . . . I owe, as do many others, to that ogre, that sacred monster,

to the desire to astound that Russian prince to whom life was tolerable only to the extent to which he could summon up marvels."

Those words of Cocteau's—revelatory of his youthful quest for a father in art—also emphasize the role in which Diaghilev continues to capture the public imagination. Enigmatic, masterful, aloof yet seemingly omniscient, his figure has exercised a fascination far exceeding even his achievements as impresario.

Personally, he was deeply weird and mysterious—one of those people whom it is tempting to label "inhuman," until one reflects how much humanism there was in his life's work. Still, it is a question what meaning most "human situations" had for him. Like a politician, he succeeded often by ruse, by setting up antagonisms and jealousies, above all by putting aside personal feelings. Grigoriev tells of how, in 1912, when Fokine unhappily resigned after ten years of friendship and collaboration, "Diaghilev received this decision almost with indifference. But this scarcely surprised me. For I had come by now to realize that he valued his collaborators only as long as, in his view, they had something new to contribute. Once they ceased to fulfill this role he felt no regret in parting with them. And so it was with Fokine." And so it was also with Bakst in 1922-23, after twenty-five years of association. Richard Cape, who had reviewed the London productions from the beginning for the *Daily Mail*, put it bluntly: "Diaghilev's devotion to his enterprise was admirable. . . . An incomprehensible character, never to be trusted—streak of treachery in him was habitual." Stravinsky, perhaps without meaning to, was even stronger: "for Diaghilev, though his fits of temper could be terrible for the moment, he never held a grudge, and when his friends and artists returned to him, he always took them back as if nothing had happened." "As if nothing had happened!" Perhaps, in fact, nothing had happened, in the countless human dramas around him, though "meant anything" to Diaghilev—compared with the perfection of each of his sixty ballets.

\* Edward Ziegler, later assistant manager of the Metropolitan Opera House, wrote a jingle:

Oh, Mr. Nijinsky,  
Where have you binsky?  
And if you are here,  
Why don't you appear  
And save the ballet from ruinsky?

Francis Steegmuller is the author of works on Flaubert, Maupassant, Apollinaire, and Isadora Duncan. His biography of Jean Cocteau won the National Book Award in 1964.



# BABBITT UNBOUND



the march of *Time* bears bitter fruit

Rhoda Koenig

ONE OF THE MORE popular American myths, along with the idea that money cannot buy happiness, or that men like women, is the myth of the thwarted artist. It is especially liked by those who earn good incomes in professions of which they are vaguely ashamed. Thus television producers would be putting on Lindbergh and Sheridan every night were it not for the eleven-year-old public mind, and advertising illustrators would be turning the art world upside down if the critics hadn't gotten together and decreed that one could and could not paint. The most passionate believers in this romance, however, are journalists. Theirs is an honorable profession, perhaps less socially useful than embalming or fruit picking, but usually more fun. Still, many journalists feel that reporting or interpreting is not enough, that they should, by influencing policy, improve the world, or, by writing fiction, illuminate it. They are the writers who, at parties, press you into the corner farthest from the bar and explain how they would transfigure economic and foreign policy. They are the editors who tell you, after four Martinis, that, if they didn't have the kids' education to think of, they would give it all up and write like John Cheever, and, after seven, like Nabokov. And in any circumstances and all degrees of sobriety,

they explain how their attempts to insinuate force and beauty into their writing are frustrated by editors who are jealous of them and publishers who do not Understand. Ineffectual angels all, beating in the void their luminous wings in vain.

THIS THEORY HAD a rare chance at proof a few months ago by a labor dispute at *Time* magazine, which has long been notorious for finding promising young writers and crushing them. On Wednesday, June 5, *Time* employees marched out. Dissatisfied by a contract offer in which management wanted to retain the right to distribute raises based on merit, *Time* writers picketed the magazine's office until a settlement was reached. The three issues published during the strike (cover-dated June 14, June 21, and June 28) were put out by correspondents and senior editors.

There were some who expected a different *Time* to emerge from these circumstances—more idiosyncratic, lighter in tone, purged of Lucyspeak. A correspondent told *The Village Voice*, "I worked my ass off getting [my story] in on time, and then I spent another whole day chasing down answers to queries about it from New York. And when it came out, there were two words—two goddam words—that were mine." The

strike promised a creative holiday. "For the first time since I got out of college, I'm seeing *my own words* in the magazine."

The question of how one recognizes two words of one's own in a completely rewritten article was an interesting one (were they adjectives? verbs? relative pronouns?), but an even more interesting one was how this correspondent, or anyone else, could find any improvement in the three issues of *Time* published during the strike. For in those three issues, *Time* was up to all its old tricks—writing in its manly, smug, "colorful" idiom; huffing and puffing away at moralistic pronouncements; filling its pages with puns that a *Time* writer who had once read Evelyn Waugh would surely describe as cringe-making; and looking for Reds under the bed.

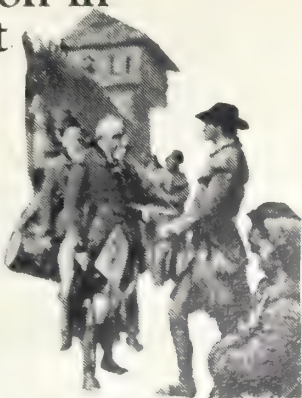
In the first issue of the strike, under the headline "Sex Scandal Shakes Up Washington," *Time*, reporting Elizabeth Ray's charge that Rep. Wayne Hays had employed her, at government expense, to be his mistress, identified the Congressman as "Hays, 65, and apparently insatiable...." It led an article on Britain's economy with the sentence: "The British have many sterling qualities, but right now sterling is not one of them." And in the "Newswatch" column, Thomas Griffith assessed the nation's changing standards of sexual morality: "Wom-



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## THE FOURTH ESTATE

en—Congressmen's girl friends, Presidents' bedmates—now gleefully sign book contracts to describe conduct that once would have earned them a scarlet A as a branded adulteress."

By the issue of June 21, the creative spirit had infiltrated the "People" department. An item about the Burtons was written in the form of a child's letter to the editor ("My Daddy says that any man who gets married so much to the same lady doesn't deserve a new divorce"), and another one began: "Hi. I'm Tom Brokaw, NBC Television's White House correspondent. The big news is that I am dumping this job to become Barbara Walters." An article on taxi design informed the reader that "in New York City, nothing is more onerous than debt and taxis."

By the June 28 issue, all restraint had fled. A report on the Teamsters' convention began with the boast: "Marxists in various corners of the globe—and possibly even some people in the U.S.—who think of the American workingman as downtrodden, etc., should have taken a look at Las Vegas last week." An article on Asian movies noted that one of "the Philippines' most popular actor-director-producers" was "Joseph Estrada, who in real life is mayor of San Juan." In the cover story, "Travel '76," Washington, though "a dateline center of power, politics, —and, lately, peccadillo," was still a city where visitors could "receive the palpable touch of nationhood." The magazine's archetypal tourists were Dickens, Trollope, and Twain, who, apparently undeterred by the forecast that this summer "10 million kids are going to upchuck their french fries," set out on a trip across the Republic. At the Donner Pass, Twain, who has evidently been reading *Time* during the trip's slower periods, suggests that the cannibalism there in the winter of 1846-47 "gave rise to the Donner's Club. Trollope is puzzled. 'Is that like Carte Blanche?' Dickens, who has been dozing, starts. 'No!' he cackles. 'Cartepurses!'" Throughout these three weeks, as before and after, people—or, rather, "denizens" of one place or another—did not "say" anything, but barked, snapped, and quipped, like so many performing dogs.

**W**HY DID THIS fleeting chance at self-expression only produce more of the horrible same? Why didn't the editors seize the opportunity to show that, out of the harness of institutional prose, they could write with wit and elegance? Why didn't the correspondents, knowing their reports would not be passed through the usual phalanx of censors, show the stuff they claim is locked within them?

This appearance of the *ur-Time* has a simple, if sad, explanation. *Time* writers, although they may point proudly to a turn of phrase here or an adjective there as expressive of their individuality, are not really interested in drawing attention to themselves. What writer eager to make his ideas known, to establish his originality, would sign up to spend his days and nights reporting namelessly on public figures and "representative Americans"? The *Time* journalist does not chafe at the bonds of anonymity and a prescribed style—he welcomes them. Under their security blanket, he can dream that he is involved in great deeds and matters of moment; while never speaking for himself, he can presume to speak for all. What is more natural than, given a free hand, he should resort to his most familiar quips and cranks, proudly showing that he can, unaided, produce a model *Time* article? The poor fellow is in the position of a criminal played by Lon Chaney who, assuming the disguise of a twisted cripple found that his legs had locked into place.

A few years ago, a *Time* correspondent wrote an article for this magazine. After handing the piece in, he called with a request. Could we, he asked, change the "I think" he had written in the last paragraph to "Millions of people think"?

On June 21 the picketing employees gave in and accepted a settlement which was not substantially different from the one they had rejected earlier. It was a decent enough settlement, and they continue to be paid well for hammering the raw prose handed them into less frightening shapes, but millions of people wish they had had the stamina to hold out a bit longer. For whatever they are paid, it is not enough.

Rhoda Koenig is an associate editor of Harper's.



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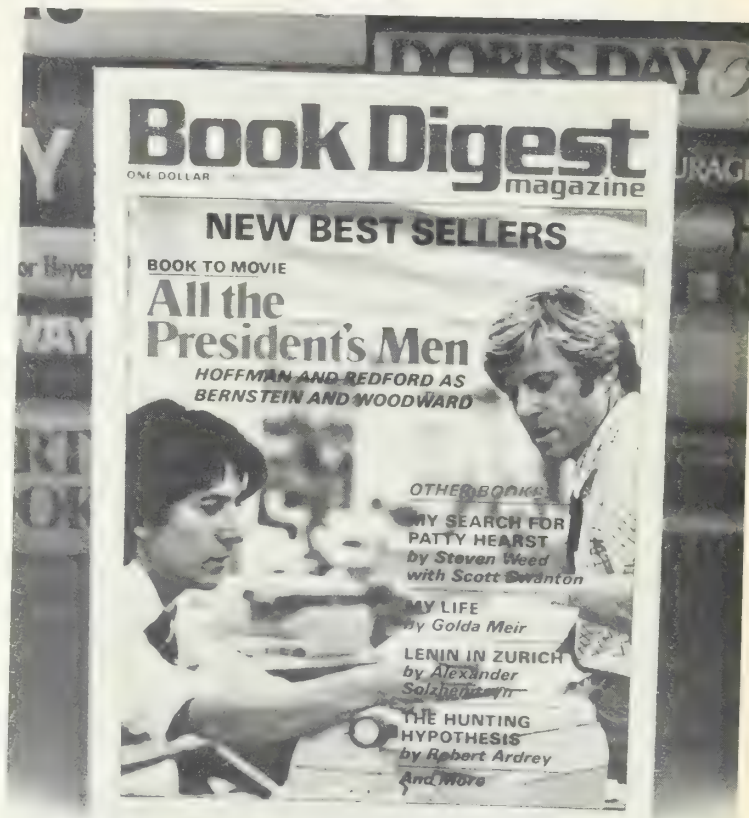
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Jerry Sarapochiello

## TUULI

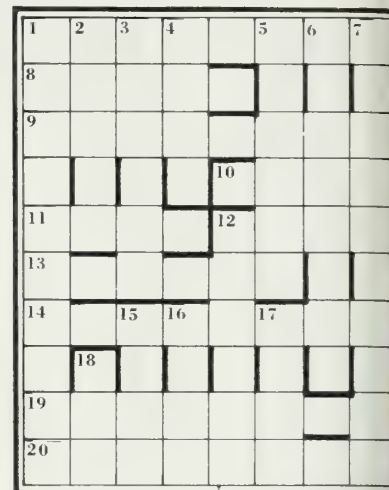
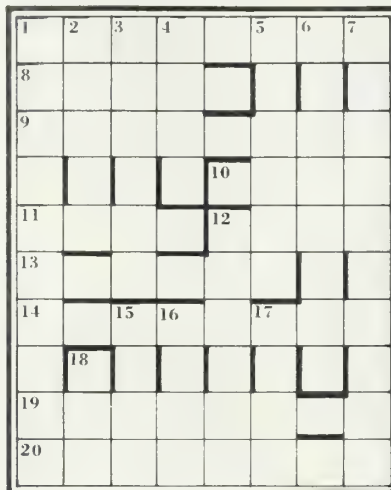
Marimekko designers of Finland chose Tuuli, the Finnish for *wind*, as the name for this 100-percent cotton fabric. You can imagine it used in several ways: as draperies, wall hangings, or cleverly cut in sections and stretched around inexpensive frames of the sort that artists use. In each instance, you would only feel the delight that comes with an indoor representation of an outdoor phenomenon. The Tuuli print says something about the excess of the Marimekko group, whose designs consistently provide a stimulus to the imagination. The black-and-white silk-screen print, completely colorfast, is fifty-four inches wide with the pattern repeated every twenty inches; \$12 per yard. (H-4)

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# PUZZLE



## NEWS CLIPPINGS

by Richard Maltby, Jr. (with acknowledgments to *The Listener*)

**This month's instructions:** The diagram represents two pages of a newspaper. Each "headline" is really two clues written consecutively, i.e., with no extra connectives and no words overlapping. One answer is to be entered in the diagram for the left-hand page, the other in the diagram for the right. Either may be clued first.

The unclued words at 1 Across will clearly distinguish the two sides. Persons entering the monthly contest are requested to label each page as right or left.

Clue answers include five proper names, but no uncommon words. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 88.

### CLUES

#### ACROSS

1. See instructions (8,8)
8. FORMER DRUNKS HOLDING POLISH ISLAND SHOWING NO ACTIVITY IN RETURNING SMALL NUMBER OF ITALIANS (5,5)
9. CHRISTMAS MUSIC IN A SUBDIVIDED STATE—SOLOIST, FUNNY; COMPANY, AVERAGE (8,8)
10. AMERICAN WRITER, HEAD OF MAFIA IN LIMERICK, TO BE EXECUTED—DEPEND ON IT! (4,4)
11. POSITIVE VOTES—OR JUST ONE? EDITORIALIZED "TIME" ARTICLE (4,4)
12. CLOSE-UP: HE'S CAUGHT IN A BED, HIDES IN TREES, SO IT'S SAID (4,4)
13. TRAVELING SOUL PACKAGES NEARLY SET; BLACK SINGERS, \$1,000 RANGE, MAKING BIG PICTURES (6,6)
14. ALIEN WHO MAKES MEN COWER, BLASTS FORMER MIDEAST GROUP, DIES AFTER DROPPING ONE (8,8)

19. SMUGGLED BAGS, RIFLES, REACTIONARY PAINTINGS, POET MOVE FROM ONE SIDE TO THE OTHER (8,8)
20. PRODUCERS OF "LI'L OL' LADY" WHO SOUND SORELY TRESSED ALL AROUND, HALF-DENY FORTUNE-TELLER RIN STEM OFF FOUR-MONTH TERM (8,8)

#### DOWN

1. CONVERTED RECENT MASS, BAPTISM, COMMUNION, ETC. C GREGATING IN CITY ROAD—FROM WHICH THEY GET THE W (10,10)
2. PRESS CLUB'S SORT OF HUMOR: PASS THE BILL THAT'S A CENT (5,5)
3. PERSIAN KING OVERTURNS CONGRESS WITH LATIN KING—OR TWENTY OR MORE DEAD (6,6)
4. FORMER UNDERGROUND CITY RING HELD IN ATTEMPT TO M BIG GAME ONE BE TEN (4,4)
5. WORK OVER DEBTS, HATEFUL COURT PROCEDURES, TRAILS V ONLY SMALL CHANGE (6,6)
6. ENGLISH GAME PLAYER GIVEN A SET-UP—COMES OUT, THRO RUNS, EVEN SLIDES (8,8)
7. PROVIDER OF COAL PUT PRESSURE ON SEWER BREAK STEAM RIGHT ON BOTH ENDS—BUT HE BLOWS THE WHISTLE ON THE (10,10)
12. COSELL'S LINE OMITTED—AMAZINGLY SHUTS UP LIKE A FLO IN FREE-FOR-ALL (6,6)
15. QUIET BASH FOR BRITISH PUSHER—BLAST HAS TWIST (4,4)
16. HOLDER, FOR INSTANCE, ELECTRIFIED IN PERSON (4,4)
17. RAPIDLY RUN SMALL MISSILE CAME APART—IT WAS PAR OLD ARSENAL (4,4)
18. RED LEADER'S MOTHER LOVE IS FOR MANY NOT ENOUGH MAKE WHOLE PARENT (3,3)

### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to News Clippings, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by September 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscrip-

tion to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the October issue. Winner's name be printed in the November issue. Winners of the July puzzle, "Right Tangles," Richard L. Miner, Williamsville, New York; Jean Martin, Hopewell, Virginia; Scott Marley, Santa Ana, California.



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PROFESSION: Urban and natural resource analyst

HOBBIES: Horseback riding, skiing, scuba diving, piano, oriental and primitive art collecting.

MOST MEMORABLE BOOK: "Kristin Lavransdatter" by Sigrid Undset

LAST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Founded nonprofit corporations which provide resource management and urban development services to governments the world over.

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# LETTERS

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## Carter controversy

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It is gardening and canning season, and I am hard-pressed to find time to comment on Mr. Lapham's article [ *The Wizard of Oz*, August]. But a "free moral person," as Mr. Kohák suggested in his extraordinarily fine piece in the same issue [ "Ancient Enemies" ], must of necessity be a responsible citizen. Mr. Lapham's analysis of Jimmy Carter was highly responsible, but it did not, I think, represent the feelings of that class of people who find themselves not only "outside of the walls of the citadel" of Washington, but outside of the citadel of the intellectual and economic community of which Mr. Lapham is a part.

It is of fundamental importance in this time of suspicion and cynicism to understand what the great—and, unfortunately, oft misinterpreted—body of American voters thinks of Jimmy Carter. Quickly, lest I or my fellows be accused of naiveté bordering on stupidity, let me state clearly that we do not regard Mr. Carter without suspicion. Indeed, as Mr. Lapham opines, it is difficult to form any concrete opinion of this elusive man.

Reservations notwithstanding, I, and I believe a majority of Americans, will vote for Jimmy Carter in November. Why? The common man lives removed from the sophistication and ennui of the social elite of this nation; his intimacy with the surrounding community encourages as well as necessitates his attempt to live as a moral individual. Hence, he retains the hope that his larger community, this nation, might reflect, especially in its leaders, that

"humanitas" which, as Mr. Kohák states, leads to genuine freedom, justice, and dignity.

In all frankness, the die is cast: the choice the voter must make this year is between a man who *might* be a "free moral person" and one of two men who are patently calloused and manipulative. The common man will be voting, not for a certainty, but for a hope—that through the person of Jimmy Carter he might see reflected in his government that essential honesty and decency and even simplicity which gives texture and meaning to his own existence.

PAMELLA HAYS  
Big Fork, Mont.

Lewis Lapham's unhappiness at Jimmy Carter's nomination seems to me to well up from the same kind of despair and cynicism he reports as coming from the New York Plaza Hotel audience.

World-weariness is understandable, and doubt may be the beginning of wisdom, but nihilism and hopelessness go over the edge.

A long time ago, St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians about faith, hope, and love. Jimmy Carter stresses the same things today. I submit that the fault is not in Jimmy Carter but in those who are no longer able to hope. And if there is any cause for embarrassment, it is that Jimmy Carter has perhaps revealed too much of himself rather than too little.

DONALD C. DAWKINS  
Kitty Hawk, N.C.

I read Lewis Lapham's comments the morning after Mr. Carter's acceptance speech. I am of the opinion that his article should be required reading for all who listened to Mr.

Carter's ramblings. I hope that many will read it before they go to the polls in November.

Also, as I reflect on Mr. Carter's acceptance speech, I am reminded of the admonitions of my old homiletic professor when I was in seminary too many years ago. He continually criticized long-winded, rambling sermons by saying, "Young man, you only need preach one sermon at a time." Mr. Carter came to several good stopping places before he quit.

WALTER E. HOSKINS  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

Thank you for Lewis Lapham's inquiries into the mystery of Jimmy Carter. One must believe that if there is the best qualified and most informed candidate, the one most devoted to the good of the nation, we are in far worse condition than any one might have imagined. America has, indeed, been flattered, purchased, cajoled, and promised some kind of utopia for at least forty years. From the New Deal to the Fair Deal to the Great Society, those yearning millions have been led; and their reward has been ashes of failure and mountains of debt. Now it seems that Mr. Carter is allowing us to assume that his is the heavenly ideal. Americans seem lost to the notion that a man walks comfortably on his feet alone.

H. L. Mencken believed that competence was the most admired of all human qualities. One wonders what he might have said about Jimmy Carter. But after so steady a series of defalcations in Washington where is the determination to recapture the rights, the privileges, the duties—and, yes, the discontents



an? One thinks of Bonaparte, either in the person of Mr. Carter, or the wings, waiting to move into the spotlight to replace Mr. Carter.

R. J. NEEDLES  
St. Petersburg, Fla.

## Fear of freedom

Teaching recent Russian Jewish immigrants gives one an interesting perspective on the U.S. and the S.S.R. in relation to each other.

All of the things we hear and read about the Soviet Union in such voices as those of Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn are true, if the voice of the ordinary refugee is to be believed. That is sometimes more interesting than the initial response these people give to American society. They say there is more crime here than in the S.S.R., and, although they are often invariably critical of our law-enforcement agencies, they often themselves respond in one interestingly uniform way to authority over them. They show cunning and guile and a glint of treachery—in short, the response of a man used to living with his back against the wall. Correspondingly, they quite often show a sense of relative freedom of choice when confronted with it here in ordinary day-to-day situations. For example, the classroom situation I teach in is far looser, more unstructured, and yet more demanding of active cooperation, than the comparable situation in the U.S.S.R. I have been told—in almost exactly the following words—that the idealistic attitude of Americans concerning the way in which an individual is supposed to act is laughed at over there. Russians in general consider America and Americans to be weak, otherwise how else could they—in all conscience—allow such things to happen in the U.S.S.R. as are now known to take place there?

Consequently, the attitude is transferred from home ground to foreign soil, since now they can actually see for themselves what's missing. It's as if the attitude which Andrei Amalrik ["Arrest on Suspicion of Courage," August] points out when making fun of the KGB chief—"In old Mother Russia we can't get on without strictness. This is not some kind of America we've got here"—were so deeply a part of the Russian char-

acter that even those who have reacted to repression by leaving the country, cannot make the necessary change to *self-control*. In fact, the one prevailing difficulty that presents itself in talking to these people is the difficulty they have realizing that where America and Russia diverge—and where they, as immigrants, must concentrate their understanding in order to fit in—is in the area of free choice, what Professor Kohák ["Ancient Enemies"] splits into freedom and morality, the two balancing agencies of democracy which even we, as Americans, are in danger of taking too much for granted.

R. G. POPPELSDORFF  
New York, N.Y.

## Faint praise

Edward Hoagland in "At Large in East Africa" [August] was not able to avoid that element of condescension which seems to come naturally to so many white tourists in East Africa. President Nyerere is "a favorite charity of the Swedes"; his moderation "seems to come naturally"; and he is "by all accounts a humane man," leaving the possibility, of course, that he may not be. President Kenyatta, "who in his eighties has gone venal and sour," has "a vaguely disreputable air," but he "isn't without appeal." Such damning with faint praise is likely to be deeply resented by most East Africans.

Mr. Hoagland's reactions to his "velvety" reception in Zanzibar ("I found it bluntly terrifying") are typical of the white tourist who has no other means of communicating with his smiling African hosts than the English/American language. His references to Stalinalee architecture, a People's Palace, the V. I. Lenin Hospital with its Chinese staff are calculated to enforce the impression of Zanzibar's administration as a Communist dictatorship. The truth is that under Sheikh Aboud Jumbe much progress has been made in associating Zanzibar with the moderate policies of President Nyerere on mainland Tanzania.

Zanzibar is one of the traditional homes of what Mr. Hoagland, from ignorance apparently, chooses to call "that funny language, Swahili," "that old slaver's tongue—pidgin

Bantu, pidgin Arabic." That is how, in their ignorance, colonial settlers in Kenya before independence used to describe Swahili. Their own feeble attempts at speaking the language could truly be called pidgin, but Swahili as the mother tongue of members of the Swahili coastal subculture is a highly developed Bantu language incorporating many borrowings from Arabic, and, in more recent times, from English. It certainly is ironic that Swahili has been adopted as the national language of Tanzania and of Kenya, but for historical, not linguistic, reasons.

LYNDON HARRIES  
Madison, Wis.

## Liberty vs. equality

Erazim Kohák in "Ancient Enemies" [August] drew a fascinating picture of the Soviet-American struggle in terms of freedom vs. perfection. There is perhaps some truth to his depiction, but I tend to think the main battle lines are drawn up between freedom and that more formidable opponent in the Western world, equality. Alexis de Tocqueville was worried after his observations of America that equality would outstrip freedom, but his fears were needless. Freedom of opportunity for the millions, freedom for them to do what they will (as long as they refrain from infringing on others) has always been the prime value in America, as Kohák also notes. In the Soviet Union and in Communist China, on the other hand, the clarion call has been to equality for the millions, equal access to housing, work, education, medical care, food, paid vacations, et cetera—often at the expense of individual liberty. The important thing for us to realize is that these are *both* important, perennial values. The way to "humanize" the Soviet Union is not to guarantee them a neutral buffer zone in Europe and help them out economically while they decolonize. A more practical suggestion would be for us to bring about a synthesis of real social and economic equality with freedom in our own backyards, and show the Soviets by example that their own synthesis of socialism with individual freedom is equally possible.

HOWARD P. KAINZ  
Milwaukee, Wis.



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In many parts of the country the cost of a hospital room (not including doctors, special nurses and medicine) is approaching \$200 per day.

A \$4,438 automobile costs \$19,979 when bought part by part as your repair shop must do, according to the Journal of American Insurance.

In some parts of the country the burning of automobiles in order to collect insurance has reached near-epidemic proportions.

In the area of medical mal-

practice suits, in one state, ten times as many million-dollar awards have been made since 1970 as in all the years before. (You may want to go over that one again.) The growing volume of such suits is adding more than \$3 billion to the nation's annual cost of health care, according to HEV.

During a recent five-year period the average claim settlement in product liability cases has increased by 300%. The resultant astronomical liability protection costs have put some manufacturing companies out of business and threaten still others.

Despite higher premiums, the insurance industry, last year alone, had an underwriting loss over \$4 billion in casualty-property lines.

These are only the direct costs and their effects. The indirect effects hit every one of us, in the form of higher product prices, higher costs for health care, unavailability of needed goods and services, in hundreds of ways, in every sector of our lives.

The next manufactured



# we raised our voice

product you buy may cost many dollars more because the manufacturer's liability protection costs it up. Further, these are dollars that might have gone for engineering improvements that could have lengthened its life.

Or your doctor bills. In many cases they've gone up because of rising malpractice premiums. And there are indications they'll go even higher as doctors are forced to turn more and more to the practice of "defensive" medicine. That is, taking X rays, ordering diagnostic tests, etc., etc., when there may be little recognized medical need for them.

Who's at fault? We're all at fault. How else could it happen?

But that isn't the point. The point is, none of us can go on pretending it isn't happening.

Is it hopeless? We don't think so. In fact, all indications are that this country is stirring itself awake. And we intend to continue to raise our voice on these matters. Because the more you know about the problems, the

more likely we can all work together toward effective solutions.

We're working with government agencies, industry associations, and private companies to do what we can to solve these problems. But we need your help. We'd like to know what you think and how you feel about insurance-related problems. And we'll share our ideas on these issues with you. Just drop a letter to our Office of Consumer Information, One Tower Square, Hartford, Conn. 06115.

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THE TRAVELERS



# VERSE

## GOLDEN GATE PROTHALAMION

by Laurel Blossom

*"You've signed the contract, now build the bridge."*

And the contract you hastily sign in a scrawl,  
But the bridge is a labor of bone.

And how many days from the scaffolding fall,  
And how many nights wash away

The work of a month and a week and a day,  
And how many years till you're grown,  
till you're grown?

On that bridge that can never be, never be done,  
In the fog and the ocean spray,

Your footsteps will feel for a ledge where there's none,  
At the edge, at the gate of the bay:

For the bridge isn't golden, my dear, it is red.  
And how many years till you're dead,  
till you're dead?

## ACCIDENT

by Paul Lamar

I heard her careful telling of my fall from the horse—  
Which they both saw from their tractor, I was skirting their land—  
And he was giving you the rescue  
When she shut my door  
To keep out the noise.

I was awake,  
But it wasn't your car, the front door, or cups that woke me,  
It was you in that house  
It was you in that house that woke me and made my body  
Clamber out of deep sleep and ache from the fall, and you...

And when you came in later to sleep on the daybed,  
To correct my quilt,  
I stopped breathing,  
I caught it to keep from speaking to you:  
We'd just have had the tiny accident story,  
And I was musing on the towering one of your speed,  
My heart,  
Our lives' knot.

To the conversation in "Wolf Kill" [August] please permit the addition of a third party—namely the hydatid tapeworm, *Echinococcus granulosus*. The sexual stages of this parasite live in the intestines of wolves or other canids, where they do very little damage. The asexual or cystic, stages live and grow attached to the liver, lungs, and brain of moose as well as many other hosts including man. The cysts occasionally grow to large size.

Although we are a bit hazy about the hydatid-moose-wolf conversation, we have better information about conversations involving parasites. The skunk is a slow-moving animal—so slow a man can easily run him down. The large roundworm of the skunk lives in his intestine and produces many thousands of eggs. A single egg is eaten by a squirrel, hatches, and the minute larva makes its way to the brain where it lodges. At dawn the squirrel is busily searching the leaves for an acorn when the skunk appears. The squirrel quickly dashes for the nearest tree, but crazily runs rapidly in a small circle. The skunk easily intercepts the circling rodent and dines at leisure.

I enter a fifteen-acre pasture, and the herd of ten Herefords dash away madly. But one soon stops and gazes back at me. He is marked number forty-four. When the steer goes to market, I request a full report from the Meat Inspection Service. Only number forty-four shows cysts of the tapeworm, *Taenia saginata*. Even my dull perceptions had picked up the signals. As a Paleolithic hunter, I could have easily walked up to that measly steer and thrown a lethal spear into him. As a civilized man I permitted the carcass of number forty-four to go to the cooler long enough to kill all the cysts.

We know very little about the relationships between hosts and their parasites, but several fascinating instances can be described in which the parasite alters the behavior of its intermediate host to make it more susceptible to predation. At least some of the "conversations of death" involve changes obvious to the predator, but obscure to the human observer.

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# RANDOM NUMBERS

Reading the public record

by Lewis H. Lapham

*Look at Life: the insolence and idleness of the strong, the ignorance and brutishness of the weak; horrible poverty everywhere, overcrowding, degeneration, drunkenness, hypocrisy, lying—yet in all the houses and on the streets there is peace and quiet; of the fifty thousand people who live in our town there is not one who would cry out, who would vent his indignation aloud. We see the people who go to market, eat by day, sleep by night, who babble nonsense, marry, grow old, good-naturedly drag their dead to the cemetery, but we do not see or hear those who suffer, and what is terrible in life goes on somewhere behind the scenes. Everything is peaceful and quiet, and only mute statistics protest.* —Anton Chekhov "Gooseberries"

**T**HE STATISTICS that appear in this office during the course of a month defy interpretation. They arrive in volume, from trade associations and government agencies, in company press releases and letters from prison, from almost every organization large enough to keep track of its gains and losses. The statistics bring news of crop failures and wholesale prices, of unemployment, box-office receipts, bankruptcy, automobile production, paperback sales, wage agreements, births of whooping cranes, and fluctuations in the market for pornography—of anything and everything about which it comforts people to keep records, presumably in the hope that their lists and averages bring them that much nearer to proving an argument for reality.

I know that these statistics have to mean something, but I'm not sure what. Wondering if this year's anticipated revenue from television adver-

tising (\$6.8 billion) has anything to do with last year's suicides in Los Angeles (961 between July 1975 and June 1976), I suspect myself of being vaguely un-American, as if somehow I had betrayed the national faith in transcendental equations. From time to time I make note of the numbers that strike me as possibly significant. Every few weeks I read through the record in the hope that it will have acquired a meaning previously invisible. The miracle never occurs. In September the statistics remain as puzzling as they were in April, and I am left, as before, with speculation.

I notice that it costs \$500,000 to maintain the office of a Congressman in Washington, and I wonder what has become of capitalism. In what other enterprise would the owners approve so large an expenditure for so small a return on their investment? The figure does not include the Congressman's annual salary of \$44,600, and it does not account for the larger expenses incurred by committee chairmen, candidates for President, or politicians under investigation for fraud. The statistician speaks of the average Congressman, one of 435, a man unknown beyond the parking lots of his own district who reads interminable testimonials into the *Congressional Record* and who can be counted upon to know little or nothing about almost all the subjects to which he addresses his attention.

The size of the Congressman's budget guarantees the continuation of his ignorance. He can afford to employ a staff that will furnish him with opinions across the entire spectrum of issues about which somebody might happen to ask him a question. He can attend international conferences, preferably in Geneva (where, *Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.*

in 1975, the United Nations obligingly convened 7,000 meetings), and he will come to regard himself well informed on subjects as diverse as Soviet strategy in the Arctic Ocean and the accumulation of radioactivity on tobacco leaves. Obviously his task is all but hopeless. As of the week of July 11, 1976, the Ninety-fourth Congress had introduced 15,013 bills into the realm of possible legislation. Confronted with so burdensome a weight of all but unintelligible prose (the tax bill alone runs to 2,000 pages) what advocate of individual freedom would condemn himself to read beyond the chapter headings? Unless he hopes to inherit the privileges of William Mills or Wayne Hays (which probably means that he looks upon statistics as stacks of poker chips), the Congressman has no choice but to become a ceremonial figure, nodding and smiling through a haze of promises, offering to look into the facts of the matter and reassuring constituents that their faith in democratic government is justified. In the House of Representatives the minimum cost of this reassurance comes to \$236,861,000 a year. I leave as the corresponding costs in the Senate, and I do not dare to think of untold millions subtracted from public treasury by Congressmen with visions of Utopia. The average American family pays a tax of about \$2,800 a year, which means that the support of a single Congressman rests on the labor of at least 600 citizens. In imperial Rome even the most portly oligarchs did not need many litter bearers to carry them to the forum.

Almost all the tax statistics make a dismal reading, and I mention only a few of them by way of a gloss on the speeches heard in the autumn





ection year. In 1953 the average American family earned \$5,000 a year and paid 12 percent of that sum in taxes of all descriptions; in 1975 the average family earned \$14,000 and paid a combined tax of 23 percent. Over the same period of time, federal and local taxes increased by 88 percent, property taxes by 82 percent, and Social Security taxes by 60 percent. It might also be noted that the average pay of federal employees has increased by 194 percent during the past twenty years, as opposed to an increase of 142 percent for people employed in the private sectors of the economy. I do not wonder that so many Congressmen appear to be complacent and affable, eager to listen to the voices of social change.

**B**UT EVEN AS I feel myself drawn to the pleasures of moral outrage, I transpose the statistics into architecture. I see tier upon tier of reports, memos, briefs, memoranda, consultations, speeches, transcripts, addendums, clarifications, and amendments—of them as impervious to the weather as the stone with which the pyramids were built. If I go any further the comparable monuments erected by the White House and the Pentagon, by HEW, CIA, and the State Department, will begin to appreciate the grandeur of the American government. A city on so vast and so magnificent a scale deserves the admiration of the citizenry that pays for its construction.

It has been said many times before, most notably by Disraeli and Mark Twain, statistics can prove anything. At the International Statistical Conference held at the Hague in 1938, a literal-minded correspondent listed 180 definitions of statistics and reported that none of the statisticians present could agree on a precise meaning. The results of public opinion polls depend on the phrasing of the questions, and numbers meant to prove one thing often prove another. When I am informed that American schoolchildren in 1975 are known to have committed 100 armed robberies, 9,000 rapes, 100 murders, and 204,000 aggravated assaults against their teachers and fellow students, I know that I



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am supposed to be struck dumb with amazement. I suspect that the numbers probably indicate restraint, testifying not so much to the violence popular in the schools as to the conditions of poverty and ignorance against which a surprisingly large number of people manage to prevail. Even allowing for the number of unreported crimes, criminal statistics portray the solutions of the few rather than the many. How much more admirable the courage and forbearance of the many.

I can be impressed by the news that 751 murders were reported last year in Detroit until I come across the further information that the citizens of the United States own 40 million handguns. The figure does not count rifles and shotguns, and it makes no attempt to guess at the number of weapons in the hands of people who fail to show them to the police. So also with the gross receipts from gambling in Clark County, Nevada (\$791,909,536 in fiscal year 1975). On first acquaintance the sum seems large enough to take as a text for a Sunday newspaper sermon about the depravity of the age. But then comes the information that

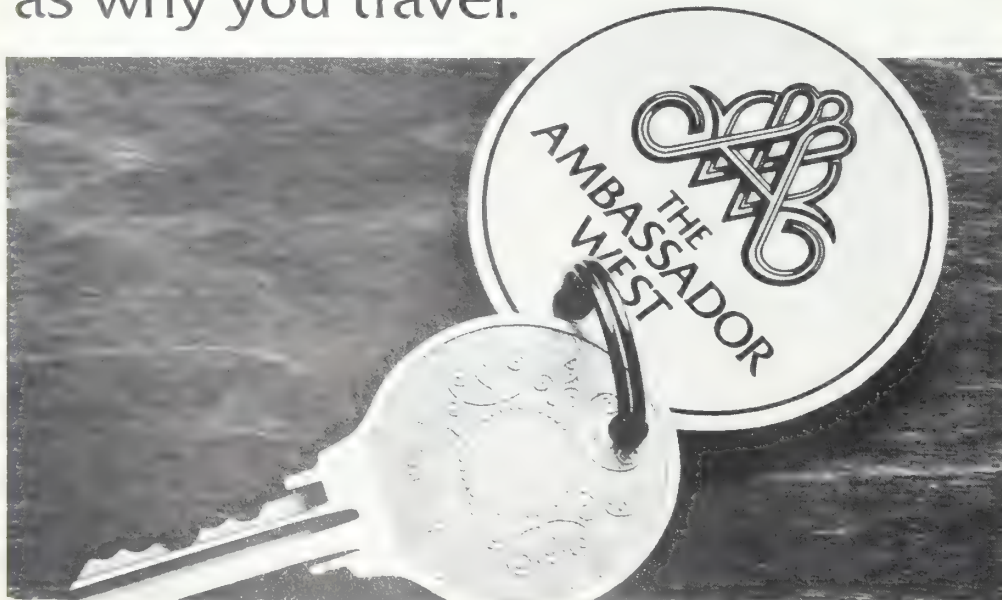
American insurance companies last year sold ordinary life insurance in the amount of \$190 billion. The orders of magnitude between the two forms of gambling do not bear comparison, and the sermon drifts off into nonsense. During 1975 the insurance companies paid \$22.5 billion to beneficiaries, policyholders, and annuitants. I don't have the corresponding figure from the casino operations in Las Vegas (i.e., the money paid to winning gamblers), but I suspect that it might represent at least as much as 15 percent of the take.

In both instances the customers seek relief from the burdens of boredom, death, time, and taxes. This is a reasonable objective, which also would account for statistics as miscellaneous as the number of cigarettes put up for sale last year in the United States (651,212,782,655), the price of 12 percent white heroin in New York (between \$1,500 and \$1,800 an ounce in August 1976), the number of cases of venereal disease reported during the week of July 11 (20,643), and the estimated television audience for the Democratic National Convention (100

million). If the numbers prove anything at all, they prove what everybody already knows—that the people of the United States have yet to devise a successful system of public education or figure out an equitable distribution of their immense wealth.

**I**N THE DARK NIGHT of a Presidential campaign it sometimes becomes convenient to moan the dissolution of the American family and to announce that American people have lost the courage of their convictions. The available statistics make a mockery of the language of despair. In May 1976 a new house sold for a median price of \$43,200, and yet, even at those rates, two-thirds of all American families own houses. Despite the cost of mortgages (about 9% in July) and repairs (\$21 an hour to work on a furnace in Chicago), the percentage of homeowners continues to rise. In 1975 the marriage rate (10.3 percent per 1,000 people) exceeded the divorce rate (5.2 percent per 1,000 people), and the number of births (3,149,000) exceeded the number of deaths (1,910,000). The population has become increasingly urban (75 percent living in cities with more than 50,000 residents), which, given the well-known evils of cities, presumably says something about the hope for larger opportunities. What amazes me about all the numbers in question is what amazes Chekhov: the patience and the goodwill with which so many people pay their taxes, suffer fools in office, refrain from killing one another, build houses that might bridge the river of the generations. In the face of their sorrows they make no account of their gains and losses, and records bear witness to the vigils of the human spirit. Of all the statistics that passed across the desk during the course of the summer that most delighted me was the counting of the debris left over from space flights that remains in orbit around the earth. As of July 1976, exactly 3,910 fragments of deteriorating metal were reported floating in the void. In their desolate circumnavigations they acquired the properties of tiny stars, glittering brightly in the untrammelled light and also being made note of as the rising and setting of the sun.

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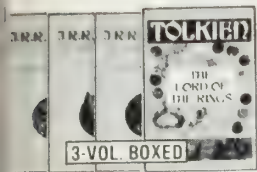


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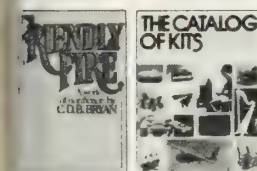
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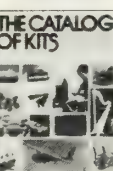
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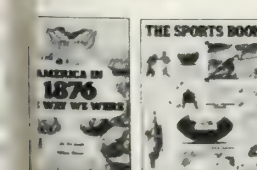
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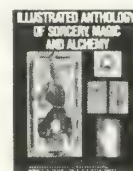
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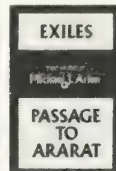
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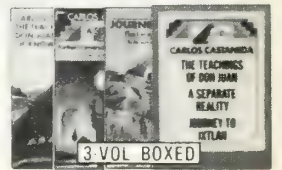
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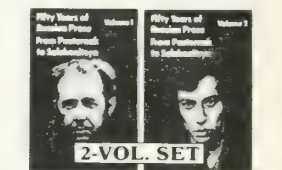
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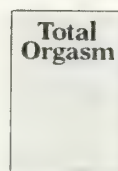
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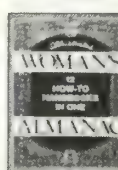
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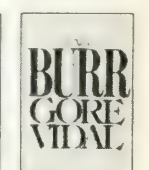
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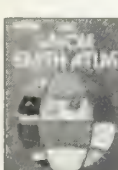
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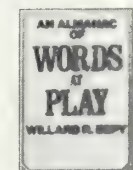
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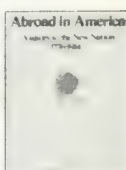
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# THE ESSENTIAL REFORM

How the present system of  
redistricting keeps  
our government unrepresentative

by David Lebedoff



**N**O ONE CAN SAY for certain who our next President will be, but there is one outcome this November that we can safely predict: the Congress is going to be reelected. Not just a majority of the Congress, not merely most of its members, but virtually all of them.

There are 100 U.S. Senators and 435 House members, most of whom feel that they hold their seats for life. They are right. In November 1972, only thirteen House members lost their seats. That was the year of the biggest Presidential landslide in recent history, a phenomenon that was expected to alter the composition of Congress. It did not. Only 3 percent of incumbent seats in the House were lost. Two years later, after the shock waves of Watergate, the situation was not radically different. Much publicity has been given to the large class of 1974 freshman Congressmen, but a majority of them came to office through primary victories or the retirement of incumbents. Those who beat incumbents in the general election account for only 9 percent of the total House, probably the maximum change that can occur.

This does not mean that there is widespread support for the Congress. Every poll and every primary this year has shown just the opposite. People hate Washington, as the governors of Georgia and California discovered, and there is no evidence whatsoever that people exempt the

legislative branch from their disdain. If anything, Congress is the very focus of anti-Potomac fever.

So how do its members keep getting reelected? The answer is simple and overlooked and awful: a gerrymander so ghastly that the Tories of a century ago would recoil from it in shame. Not *all* their boroughs were rotten.

**E**VERY TEN YEARS a national census is taken, as the Constitution requires. After about a year all the census data is completed and analyzed. The next step is to reapportion Congressional districts so that each one can be restored to the same numerical size. This is also a Constitutional mandate, and good idea, for the population of our country has always been mobile.

Although the Constitution (Article I, Section 2) says that the House of Representatives must be reapportioned every ten years, it does not say who is supposed to do it, and that is the problem. The groups that have been responsible for the reapportioning are the state legislatures, all fifty of them, and these institutions are inherently unqualified for the task.

Some state legislatures are very

able bodies, and some are not. No matter. None of them should be trying to define Congressional districts, for they are not able to do that job fairly. They cannot avoid the creation of districts that favor one party over the other. They carve out each new district in a way that ensures perpetual single-party rule.

The same thing happens in every state. A typical example would be my own state, Minnesota, which has eight Congressional districts. The 1970 census showed that the districts were out of proportion, so the following year's session of the Minnesota legislature set to work to fix things up. It did an excellent job of making every district the same size; however, it also ensured that a single political party became more entrenched in almost every district. The Republican districts tended to become more Republican, and strongholds of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor party more completely DFL.

The reapportionment *had* to happen that way, because, with a solitary exception, every Minnesota legislator is a member of one of those two political parties, with his future tied to party fortunes. Republican legislators are more likely than not to come from Republican Congressional districts, and with the DFL the process works the same way. As these legislators see it, the more solid their district in partisan alliance, the safer their own seats will be. An unbeatable Congressman heading a ticket is

*David Lebedoff, a Minneapolis lawyer, is the author of The 21st Ballot and Ward Number Six, and treasurer of the Democratic-Farmer-Labor party of Minnesota.*



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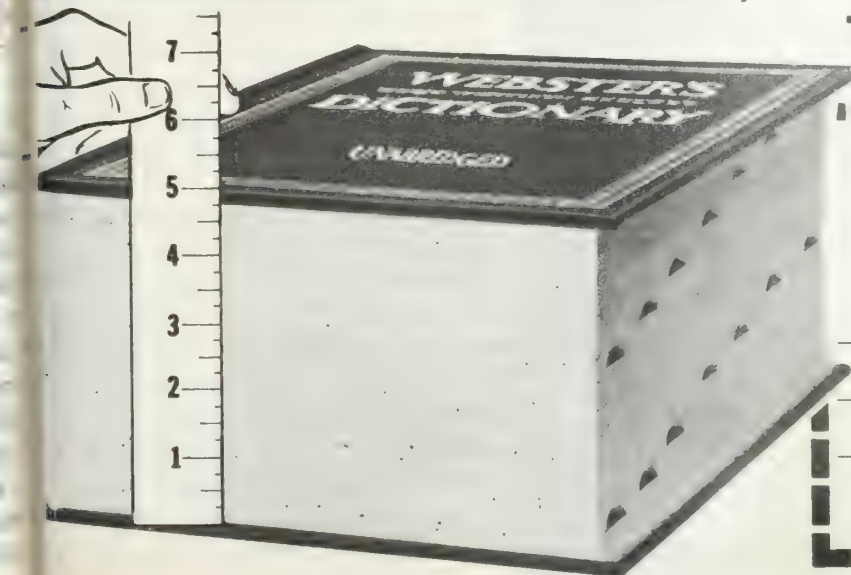
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good insurance for his colleagues farther down on the ballot. And if any of them fails to notice that point, his Congressman will remind him.

So the Republican legislators looked for ways to make the Third Congressional District more Republican. They were able to meet that challenge. The Third District was mostly suburban, and relatively well to do. But at one end of the district was troublesome Anoka County, whose residents were somewhat more blue-collar in origin and voted heavily DFL. The solution was easy. The Third District had grown too large, anyway. Part of it would have to be removed. The Republican legislators were only too glad to saw off Anoka County. However, once that was done, they did have to put it somewhere. It bordered the Sixth District, and so they could have transferred it there. That was out of the question, for the Sixth District was then thought to be Republican, but not overwhelmingly so. If Anoka County were added to it, the result would be a swing district, which must never be allowed. Instead, a happier solution presented itself. The Third District also abutted the Eighth, an area so staunchly DFL that its Republicans have sometimes not troubled to put up a Congressional candidate. The Eighth was certain to vote DFL anyway; the Republicans could do themselves no harm by adding still another DFL county to its total.

And what did the DFL legislators think of this plan? They voted for it. The DFL members of the Eighth District would not turn down such a healthy transfusion, whether they really needed it or not. And so the Third District became even more Republican, and the Eighth District more unbeatably DFL.

The same sort of trade-off occurred with most districts in Minnesota, and with most districts everywhere else in this country, because when state legislators set out to draw new Congressional lines, the same process is always followed:

1. The typical state legislator of the same party as his Congressman will vote to increase his party's margin in that Congressional district.

2. The size of the minority party's territory will not be reduced in one district without enlarging it in a neighboring district, where that party already enjoys majority control.

3. The opposition legislators from the neighboring district always support this move because of Rule 1.

**T**HIS PROCESS may work well for state legislators and incumbent Congressmen, but it is a disaster for everybody else. It has resulted in a Congress in which nearly every seat is permanently safe. The best chance of beating an incumbent Congressman is to be of his own party and oppose him in the primary. Forget about the general election.

This stalemate has made a remarkable difference in the lives of all Americans, though it has not been widely recognized. The partisan trade-off of Congressional seats has struck two calamitous blows to the vitality of our national life. First, it has helped to atrophy our political parties. Politics is an adversary process, which thrives on contest. When two parties face one another in a close election, each must seek to swell its ranks with newcomers, workers, volunteers. To survive, they must recruit. Openness is not merely desirable, it is essential. But when one party enjoys an unbeatable margin, with victory automatic, the impetus to add new activists is gone. The incumbent Congressman can be reelected without their help. When victory is certain, the party is a nuisance. The safe incumbent feels much more comfortable if the token party workers are loyal friends who will leave him alone.

The minority party structure also stays small and weak, because there is no hope of victory. People don't become active in campaigns when they know that their side will never win. So minority-party members find other outlets for their concerns. Quite a few of them join Common Cause.

The best natural focus of a political party ought to be the Congressional race. Unlike Senate contests, or many governorships, a seat in Congress is supposedly up for the taking every two years. It should be the natural focus for party energy, the central activity that fuels the rest. Instead, the decay of Congressional district party structures has infected each party at every level, and could be the major cause of their present and obvious decline. (The tragic effects of that decline, the lost oppor-

tunities for responsiveness and renewal, have been described all too well by David Broder in his excellent book *The Party's Over*.)

The second calamity is even worse. One-party dominance in each Congressional district has made the House of Representatives woefully out of touch with the people of this country. The Founding Fathers intended the House to be the body most receptive to the changing public mood. Instead, it is the least. Congressmen were supposed to be intent on getting reelected every two years; the stirring hopes, the altered needs of their constituents had to be heard and expressed, or else. The House was designed to be tuned to the nation, will so closely that some even feared change might be too swift and anarchy prevail. That has not been a problem. Most Congressmen avoid the tough decisions, because they know they can get away with doing that. Indeed, they see decisiveness as the only threat to their survival. A Congressman from a district in which 72 percent of the voters belong to his own party can feel that if he plays it safe he'll hold his seat for life. After twenty years in office he sees his own district as the place where he holds his fund-raising dinners, and to which he returns for biennial swing through senior-citizen high-rises. He isn't part of life back there, and hasn't been for a very long time. He gets off the plane at Dulles and says, "It's good to be back home."

**S**O NOW WE ARE burdened with lifetime legislators, whose tenure is threatened only by senility, death, or scandal. They can fudge and avoid and delay as they want, and not be held accountable. No wonder the most controversial issues of the day—abortion, busing—have been handed over by default to the federal courts. Seemingly restrained judges who hate to legislate end up doing precisely that, on the ground that *someone* has to.

It might be argued that the elimination of risk at the ballot box has freed most Congressmen to follow their consciences, to speak and vote boldly without fear of defeat. It doesn't work that way. Bold innovations, such as they are, seem to come from those Representatives who face serious opposition to their election.



Risk is the response to challenge. Security breeds only caution.

So there it is. Our parties have atrophied, and the federal legislature is immobilized. The people sense the insulation, the isolation, of their Representatives, and instinctively turn away from Washington.

But there is an answer. There is a way to restore responsiveness to the House of Representatives, and to renew the impact of our political parties. The problems here described have come about because state legislatures have inflicted upon Congressional districts what amounts to single-party rule. This can, and should, be removed. Congressional reapportionment should be taken away from the legislatures by the Congress and given to a federal reapportionment board. Its selection could be similar to that which created the Federal Election Commission. The board could have a general mandate to avoid single-party dominance, but it need not take exquisite pains to balance the parties equally within each district. Quite the contrary. It should, and could, ignore the partisan politics of reapportionment and do its job on the basis of population alone, as the framers intended. The political side will take care of itself.

Congress has the power to create such a board for such a purpose. The Fourteenth Amendment, as construed in several recent Supreme Court decisions (*South Carolina v. Katzenbach*, *Katzenbach v. Morgan*, *Oregon v. Mitchell*), could be used to end single-party rule in the districts and to accomplish a reform more sweeping and pervasive than most Americans have ever seen or hoped for. Since such a broad reform would undermine the lifetime security that most of its members now enjoy, Congress may refuse to take any action.

We cannot permit that to happen. Public pressure must be brought to bear, and Governor Carter should make the passage of this legislation a major part of his campaign. It could be entirely consistent with the mandate for responsiveness that has been placed on him in the primaries. It could be of considerable help in getting elected, and it would serve to correct the Bicentennial consciousness toward the open society that the framers intended—an openness frustrated and calcified but not yet irretrievably lost. □

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# ETHICAL APTITUDE TEST



Martim Avillez

Not all the candidates pass

by Leonard C. Lewin

**T**HIS SHORT TEST is one of a series prepared by the Institute of Situational Ethics of Washington, D.C., as part of a program to determine the ethical quotients of persons applying for admission to professional schools and of those seeking positions of responsibility in business, in government, and in other occupations involving policy decisions. The ISE is funded by the American Free Enterprise Foundation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization chartered to "support and advance the principles of clear thinking in American life."

Along with others in the series (Political Pragmatism, Business Practice, Professional Ethics, Personal Relations, et cetera) this quiz was administered to a representative sampling of 435 adult Americans. A summary of their responses is included. Readers who wish to determine their own EQs will find the scoring procedure and the correct answers, as computed by the senior fellows of the Institute, on page 21.

## E.A.T. SERIES I The Value of Life

The National Kidney Foundation has reported that many persons have

offered to sell kidneys for transplantation.

1. Would this be improper?
2. Would it differ in principle from the common practice of selling blood?
3. If it is not improper, how should the price of a kidney be determined—by direct negotiation, by medical administrators, by governmental regulation, or in some other manner?

As with other goods and services, the medical care available to the rich is superior to that available to the poor. The difference is most conspicuous in the application of new and expensive lifesaving techniques.

4. Is ability to pay an acceptable basis for allocating such services? If not, how should they be apportioned?

Symptoms of life can now be sustained long after consciousness has expired, by means of artificial respirators and other devices.

5. In such cases, when available medical opinion confirms that the condition is irreversible, by what criterion should the decision to "pull the plug" be made, if at all?

*Leonard C. Lewin is the author of Report from Iron Mountain and Triage.*

6. Who should make the decision?

Many drugs of great potential life-saving value can be tested effectively only on human beings, but often with such risk to the subjects tested that only those who felt they had nothing to lose would willingly participate if they knew the dangers involved.

7. Under what circumstances, if any, would it be right to conduct such tests without ensuring that the persons tested had a clear and complete understanding of the risks they would be taking?

Before the establishment of the national fifty-five-mile-per-hour speed limit, automobile-related deaths were running at the rate of fifty to sixty thousand per year. (Current figures are somewhat lower.) Some studies indicate that a twenty-mile-per-hour speed limit would reduce this figure to 10,000 or less. Assume this estimate is correct; assume further that for each ten miles per hour the speed limit is set above twenty miles per hour the death toll rises by 10,000 take into account whatever other factors seem relevant.

8. What is a reasonable national speed limit?



Increasing concern is being expressed, notably on the grounds of safety and cost efficiency, about the wisdom of expanding the use of nuclear reactors as a source of energy in this country over the next twenty-odd years. Assume here—for the sake of argument—that substantial economic benefits could be proved.

9. What is the maximum acceptable twenty-year level of risk for such a program? (Express the answer in terms of statistically probable fatalities from nuclear accidents—for example, a 10 percent chance of 10,000 deaths, a 1 percent chance of 100,000 deaths, a .1 percent chance of 1 million deaths, et cetera.)

10. Given, as in these examples, the same risk *ratio*, which is preferable:

- (a) A greater chance of fewer deaths?
- (b) A smaller chance of more deaths?
- (c) Immaterial?

In many remote parts of the world, vast numbers of people die from famine, disease, and other generally predictable disasters.

11. How much should the average American be willing to spend annually to reduce the number of these deaths?

Three years ago, when the oil embargo was put into effect by the Arab states, and the escalation of oil prices has begun, some people proposed American military seizure of one or more of the principal oil-producing countries. Assume, again for the sake of argument, that such an action would result in a net gain for the American economy of \$2 billion per year for ten years.

12. What is the maximum number of American deaths that such an action would warrant?

13. Of foreign deaths?

14. What are the principal criteria for establishing the relative value of human lives?

15. How much, in dollars, is the average human life worth?

### Summary of Responses

Where 80 percent or more of the respondents were in unqualified agreement, no comment is included. Numerical answers are weighted

averages, to the nearest significant round figure.

- 1. No.
- 2. No.
- 3. By direct negotiation. (Nearly half, however, thought that medical administrators should regulate the terms of such sales.)

4. Yes. (Respondents who suggested that other factors should be considered—most often mentioned were productivity, achievement, and life expectancy—agreed that ability to pay afforded the only workable standard as well as a rough measure of productivity and achievement.)

5. The most generally cited criterion was unwillingness of the persons or institutions bearing the cost of the life-support systems to maintain them.

6. The same persons or institutions.

7. A consensus approved testing without informed consent on persons judged to be “unproductive” or “undesirable,” the two words most commonly used. Definitions, where offered, varied widely.

8. Seventy-three miles per hour.

9. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents picked one of the three

examples offered, all of which carry the same risk ratio.

- 10. (c).
- 11. \$22.
- 12. 84,000.
- 13. 240,000.
- 14. The principal criterion cited by almost all respondents, in varying language, was potential economic productivity. Also mentioned by 10 percent or more were life expectancy, achievement, and character.
- 15. \$28,000.

**Scoring procedure:** Questions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, and 13 count one point each, questions 4, 9, 12, and 14 two points, questions 8, 11, and 15 three points, for a total of 25. Where numerical answers were called for, a deviation of up to 10 percent is considered correct, and up to 20 percent receives half credit. Adjustment: If you feel you may have been unduly influenced by the responses of others, *add* two points; if you are sure you were not influenced by the answers you read, *deduct* two. A score of 15 is par. The correct answers are those that appeared in the summary, since the governing principle here is that whatever is right. □

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# ROMAN SPRING

The Italian election turns out to be not so apocalyptic as feared, or hoped

by Erazim Kohák

**I**TALY'S LAST ELECTION took place amid great fears and expectations—at least outside of Italy. In Washington, Mr. Kissinger fussed for weeks about Italy going Communist. From Moscow, Mr. Brezhnev warned the Italian Communists in pontifical tones against going democratic. In Rome, Mr. Berlinguer earnestly assured Washington and Moscow that he intended to do both. By election time, some 2,000 foreign correspondents were on hand in Rome to watch the Italians make history.

The polls opened on Sunday. That night, the final game of the European soccer championship played the elections right off the TV screens. The underdog Czechoslovak team scored two surprise goals in the first ten minutes of play. The West Germans rallied, broke through a vigorous defense, and brought the score to 2 to 1—but that is another story. By Monday night, the championship over, the election returns started coming in.

In front of the Communist headquarters on Via delle botteghe oscure a small crowd gathered to hear Mr. Berlinguer speak like a politician on an election night. The mood was festive but hardly militant. There were no clenched fists: even Mr. Berlinguer greeted his supporters with clasped hands and a smile. A gaggle of ven-

dors did a brisk trade in ice-cream cones, hammer-and-sickle key chains, sandwiches, and red scarves with the party emblem.

Down a short street, on the Piazza del Gesù, the old palace which serves as the headquarters of the Christian Democrats stood dark and silent. The square itself was deserted except for a detachment of *carabinieri* smoking their cigarettes and conversing listlessly in the darkness. The Christian Democrats, whose candidates and supporters are, on the average, some twelve years older than their Communist counterparts, are not much given to public feasting at 3:00 A.M.

As for dancing in the streets, that was left to the Radicals, celebrating their non defeat in the Piazza Navona. Their minuscule party, campaigning on a platform of individual rights and alternative life-styles, managed to scrape together the required 1 percent of the vote to seat a grand total of four deputies.

When the results were in, the new Parliament promised to look more like a two-party legislature and less like a Whitman's Sampler of political ideologies. The Christian Democrats, who have ruled Italy ever since the war, did not disintegrate as predicted. Instead, they picked up

*Erazim Kohák is a professor of philosophy at Boston University.*

strength, winning almost 40 percent of the seats in both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. The Communists gained, too, ending up with about 34 percent of the seats in both houses. Of the minor parties, only the Socialists, with almost 10 percent, retained a meaningful representation. Instead of making history, the Italians had made like voters in a democracy.

**T**O THE FOREIGN journalists who waited up with prepared copy about democracy in peril or a Euro-Communist triumph, the results may have seemed anticlimactic. They should not have. Italian political reality is actually more dramatic than the international rhetoric about Italy. It is just that global slogans do not fit it very well. Those slogans assume a smoothly working society which can take its daily functioning for granted and worry about ideology. In Italy, that is not a safe assumption.

The patient whom I visited in a state hospital had not had his bed changed for three days. His neighbor was fortunate: his family brought him fresh sheets and a hamper of food. The medical service personnel were not on strike. Too many of them simply stayed away from work. It is more advantageous to work a



Cathy Hull



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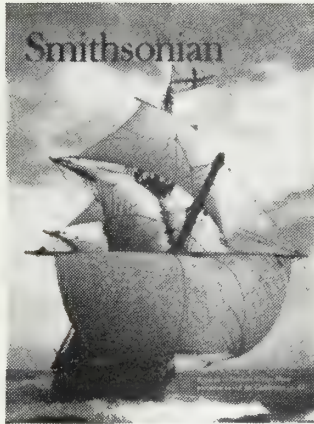
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ROMAN SPRING

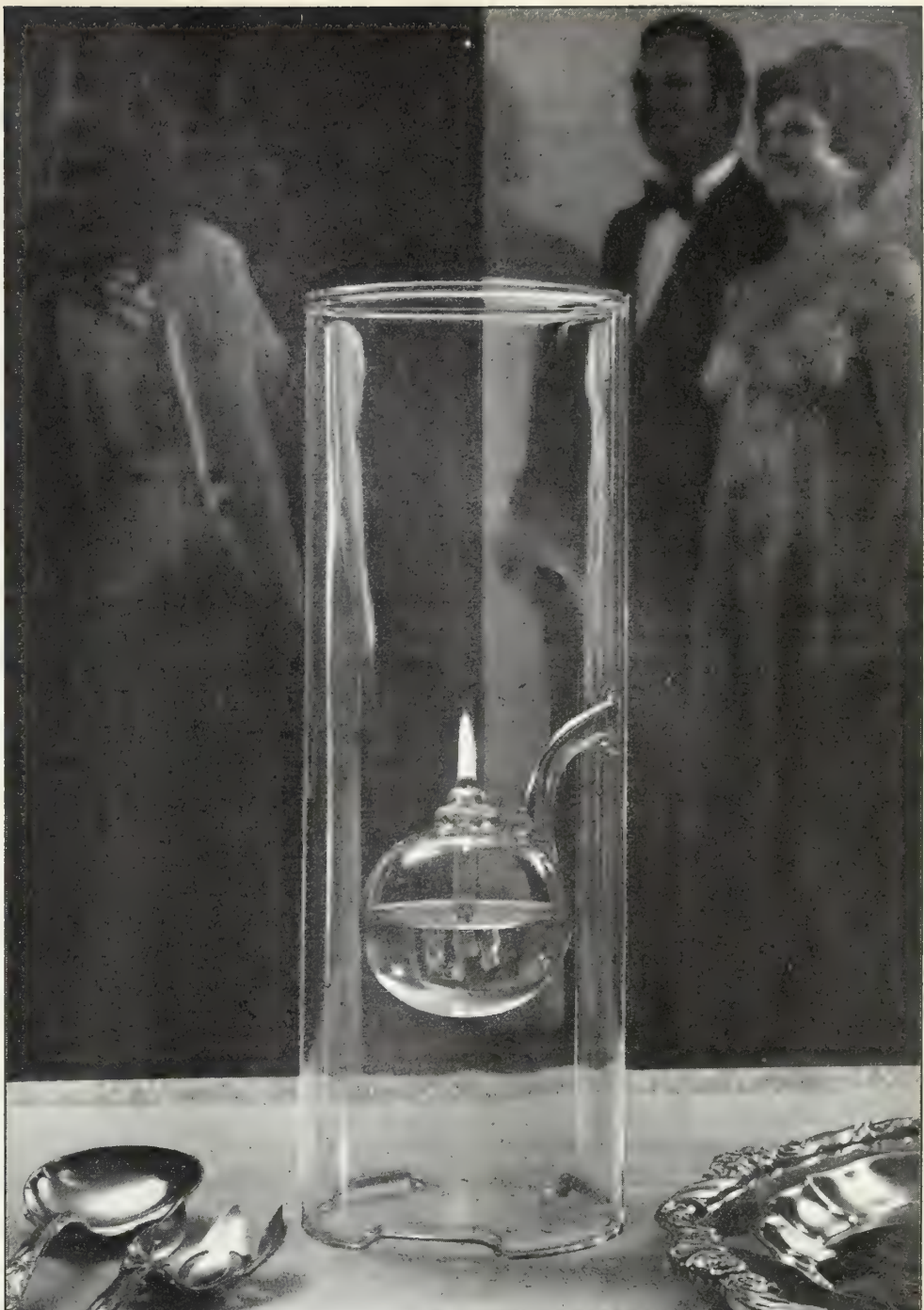
lay or two a week, just enough to keep the pension, and to spend the rest of the time at more profitable pursuits. The hospital director sounded earnest and powerless. The union rules, he explained, make it impossible to fire the absentee; the state staffing rules preclude hiring a replacement. He could do nothing—though he wished the government could.

The mayor of the island town of Ponza spoke with the same resigned exasperation. His strikingly beautiful fishing village, which doubles as a summer resort, depends on a tanker for its fresh water. The last shipment had been heavily contaminated with petroleum. Someone did not clean the tanks, someone did not wash them out, someone did not check the shipment before signing the certificate. The mayor showed the results of the chemical analysis. He had appealed, urged, complained, and pleaded with all the regional and state authorities. But he could do nothing himself: the town was not a party to the water contract. Two ministries, Public Health and Commercial Shipping, contract with an arms manufacturer to make the deliveries. It is up to the government to do something.


Two men shared my table at a working-class *trattoria* on a side street near the center of Rome. One, a waiter, had just retired on a month-pension of 80,000 lire—\$100, by generous estimate. The other, a civil servant, could expect almost ten times as much. Both acknowledged the inequity, but both felt powerless. The pension system is administered by the government. Would the election change something? No, both agreed. The election was political, this was an administrative problem. The government should simply do something.

The restaurant owner agreed: the government should do something. At this time the government was the Municipality of Rome and the topic was litter in the street. The street should be swept, the trash removed, the whole city cleaned up, he said as he emptied a box of refuse in a corner. Yes, the government should do something.

Even allowing for Italian overstatement, the ineffectiveness of the Italian civil administration is striking. Italy gives the impression of a



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society on the verge of utter collapse. Roman streets are littered with trash; plaster crumbles off unpainted buildings. The post office takes a week to deliver a letter from one street to the next; Italian bureaucracy takes much longer than that to deal with the simplest administrative problems from pension adjustments to building permits. For a professor, a promotion can mean two years without pay while the bureaucracy determines his new salary. Tax collection was utterly haphazard until a year ago. The medical care still is. The rickety public transport system might or might not work on any given day, depending on the whim of the unions.

Yet, by all conventional standards, Italy is a modern Western country. Italian industry and technology challenge the world's leaders. The Italians export entire factory complexes. Italian refineries supply all of Europe with petroleum products, Italian fashions set world trends, Italian politicians speak the language of global politics.

The contrast may well be the key to what the Italians call the "crisis of transition." Italy's modernity is a very recent achievement. In scarcely a generation, the Italians have transformed a backward, semifeudal land into the world's seventh industrial power. What is more, they have done it without resorting to the usual tools of forced modernization. Successive Italian governments have scrupulously respected both individual freedoms and democratic norms.

In a free society, however, such modernization is inevitably a rather uneven process. Technology changes far more rapidly than social patterns. Civil administration changes perhaps most slowly of all. In Italy it remained virtually unchanged while the country underwent a fundamental transformation. Today the strain is reaching a breaking point. While Mr. Kissinger, Mr. Brezhnev, and even Italy's own politicians speak of democracy and Communism, for the Italian voter the most pressing issue is simply effective government. As the shift of votes to the two major parties showed, most Italians want a government capable of governing—and most of them would prefer a non-Communist government. But while they may disagree as to who should govern, they are virtually

unanimous that, for God's sake, somebody finally should.

**B**UT CAN ITALY be governed at all—or must it be ruled, as it has been throughout most of its modern history? Many thoughtful Italians are pessimistic. Italy has an incredibly overgrown officialdom but, except in the Piedmont region, no tradition of civil service. With a few honorable exceptions, the Italian official regards his post as a personal distinction, not as a public trust—and certainly not as a responsibility accountable to the public. The point of an office is its dignity, protected from public criticism by custom as well as by several of the many laws from the Mussolini era still on the books. Italy bristles with titles and uniforms. Even a minor railway station rates two resplendent railway policemen whose function seems to be to blow a whistle when a train approaches.

Italians criticize their public officials bitterly, but those officials are quick to turn the criticism around—and again not without reason. While Italian officials show little inclination to take initiative and responsibility, so, they will point out, do the people in any but strictly personal matters. In a small town north of Naples I was told the story of peasants who, 100 years ago, petitioned their lord to order them to build the road they needed. The story is almost certainly apocryphal: I have come across it before in other sources. But here it had a living echo. This spring the local hotel owners had criticized the municipal administration for failing to order them to cooperate in cleaning up the common beach in front of their hotels. It had never occurred to them that they, not the government, should clean up the beach, set up cabins, and promote tourism.

Italians have a ready explanation for such attitudes. The operative term, pronounced with a shade of contempt, is *mammismo*, best paraphrased as the mentality of the pampered child. The Italian male, they will tell you (exempting themselves, if males) is adored and pampered from birth. Since bearing a man-child is woman's great claim to recognition, most Italian mothers and wives prop up their males, encouraging them to be beautiful, precocious,

vain, irresponsible, and existentially incompetent. In so doing, the Italian woman makes herself indispensable—and dominant. The male may be the master, but he needs his mother, or so the theory goes. Males brought up with that conception of manhood can hardly be expected to develop a sense of civic responsibility. They need a government which fulfills the mother function, freeing them of responsibility and leaving them time to be beautiful. But, because government is virtually a male preserve, it becomes a series of virtuoso performances while the urgent tasks of public service remain undone.

With all due respect to my Italian friends, I find it extremely difficult to take seriously this excursion into pop psychology. What they call *mammismo* undoubtedly does describe rather accurately one particularly unlovely aspect of Italian life. But it does not describe much that is also Italian—the versatility, hard work, imagination, and endurance which made possible the achievements of the past thirty years. Starting with very little, the Italians have created a modern country, and preserved their liberty and democracy in the process. The *mammismo* syndrome may describe something, but it explains nothing—neither Italy's greatness nor her failures.

The explanation, I suspect, may be rather more prosaic. The modern state, with its competent, anonymous civil service, simply has not had the time to become a fact of Italian life. Other European countries have been building their civil administrations for three centuries or more. Italy's rulers have, too often and for too long, been conquerors bent on domination rather than public service. As recently as the age of Mussolini, the survival of Italian society hinged on the ability to ignore the state rather than to depend on it, and to turn instead to family, kin, and one's network of friends. It may be that today that ability, long Italy's strength, has become an obstacle in the building of an efficient modern society. But age-old habits change slowly and, for better or worse, centuries of experience have conditioned Italians to the assumption that the way to get things done is not to go to an office but to call up a friend.

The advantage of the Christian Democrats in the postwar years was



**If we don't deal now with the energy problem in its entirety, we may soon be facing an even bigger problem—how to sustain our economy and our social structures when there's not enough energy to go around.**

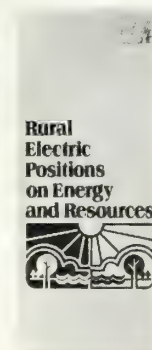
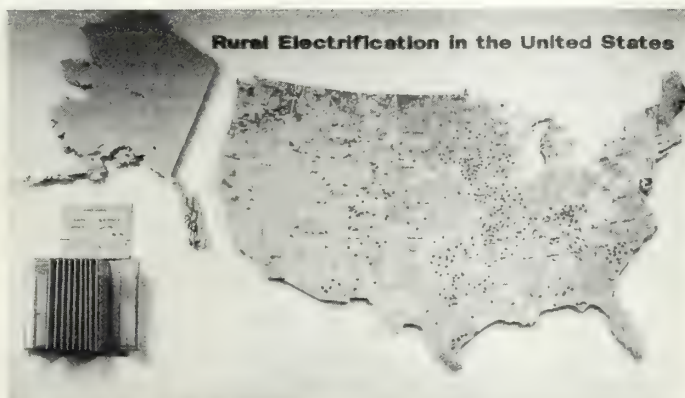


Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is a rural electric cooperative which provides light and power for more than 37,000 farms, homes, businesses and industries in a five-county area of middle Tennessee. Cumberland averages 8.3 meters per mile of line; the national average for rural electric systems is four.



John R. Dolinger, manager of Cumberland EMC, Clarksville, Tenn., is president of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, through which America's rural electric systems formulate and espouse policies on national issues.

Nationwide, some 1000 consumer-owned, non-profit rural electric cooperatives and public power districts serve 25 million consumers in 46 of the 50 states. They own and maintain nearly two million miles of line—42% of the nation's total.



Annually, delegates from each of the nation's rural electric systems meet to formulate policy. For a statement of their positions on energy, write to "Energy Policy", NRECA, 2000 Florida Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

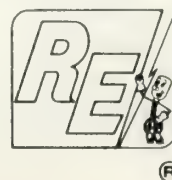
**We've said it before; we're saying it again. The longer we delay development of a comprehensive national program to ensure adequate energy for the future, the more unmanageable the problem becomes.**

**The problem is multi-faceted, highly complicated. The answers aren't all that easy to come by. But in every critical situation, there's a point where debate must give way to decision—and action. With energy, we think that point has been reached.**

**In the weeks ahead, we're going to be speaking out on some of the tough decisions that must be made . . . pushing for commonsense, people-oriented approaches.**

**It is our responsibility to do so, as meaningfully and forcefully as we can.**

America's rural electric systems





that they understood this clearly. The Democrazia Cristiana of that period was not so much a party organization in the strict European sense as a loose party machine based on an exchange of favors for votes, in the best tradition of New York's Tammany Hall or Boston's James Michael Curley. The Italians call it the *sottogoverno*: government in a low key, quietly getting things done behind the scenes by a judicious manipulation of favors and obligations.

To Americans of the "clean Gene" era, this may seem unsavory. America has outgrown its need for the political machine too recently to see its virtues as well as its flaws. But, for all those flaws, the party machines performed a crucial service in America's great immigrant communities, whose people had been uprooted and were devoid of a sense of civic responsibility. In effect, the machines utilized private interests for public good and, in turn, directed public resources to meeting private needs, albeit in a way totally repugnant to the English tradition of civil service. In Italy, the Democrazia Cristiana preserved Italian freedom and made Italian growth possible precisely because its *sottogoverno* rested on the strength of the Italian social texture rather than on the weakness of the Italian state.

Unfortunately, as Americans realize too well, a party machine has little capacity for self-correction and is hopelessly vulnerable to corruption. *Sottogoverno* inevitably outlives its usefulness and degenerates into plain *malgoverno*, misgovernment. It did so in America, and it has done so in Italy. The present Italian turmoil is less a revolt against democracy or for Communism than a revolt against antiquated, obsolete misgovernment.

**M**UCH OF THE strength of the Partito Comunista Italiano is that it seems to offer a crisp, efficient alternative to the DC machine. Not that the Communists have anything against a judicious exploitation of patronage: they do not. Their use of their position as middlemen in the lucrative Italo-Soviet trade has proven them masters of the *sottogoverno*. But, having been in opposition ever since 1947, they

were effectively cut off from most sources of patronage. To survive as an effective political force, they built up a party organization based on enthusiasm and discipline in place of a party machine.

The difference came home to me when I was seeking local guides in the districts. The local chairman of the Democrazia Cristiana in a small town south of Rome was most obliging. His cousin lives in Boston: surely I would remember if he ever called on me in America. He telephoned a friend who owed him a favor—the friend's son spoke French and German. Before long, I was being introduced almost as a relative at the sidewalk restaurant where much of the town's business is transacted.

In a comparable town in the Emilia-Romagna region, Italy's Red belt, the local chairman of the Communist party thumbed through a notebook, then dialed a young party member. He spoke a few sentences about the importance of foreign press coverage for the party and instructed the man to report in thirty minutes. The tone was comradely, the authority unmistakable and unquestioned. In half an hour a young man, a student on vacation, this time speaking French and Russian, was explaining the subtleties of the dialectic and local party organization to me with the deference due the older comrade who assigned him to me.

Enthusiasm, however, is a perishable commodity, and discipline hardly the way to foster social maturity. Italy needs a government capable of commanding confidence and respect without having to rely on deals or on discipline. Neither the Christian Democrats nor the Communists alone can claim sufficiently broad support for that. Italy, as a Communist party official told me after Mass, cannot be governed without both the Church and the unions. The priest agreed, reluctantly, though most priests would not, just as most Communists do not go to Mass.

After thirty years of divisive rhetoric, a DC-PCI coalition seems as improbable as, say, a Reagan-Schweiker ticket seemed last July. The chief appeal of the DC has always been as an alternative to Communism, and the Communist vote has been in great part a protest against the DC. But both parties are changing. The

DC's impressive present chairman, Benigno Zaccagnini, comes from Ravenna, where the Communists won 50 percent of the vote, to 24 percent for the Christian Democrats. He clearly sees the need for a rebirth of his party, for new policies and imaginative approaches. On the other side, Enrico Berlinguer, a relatively young Sardinian with an earnest smile and a Catholic wife, is no dogmatic Communist. He has done his best to dissociate his party from its traditional authoritarianism and from the policies of its ominous allies in East Europe. He has insisted, explicitly and emphatically, on the overriding need to preserve civil rights and democratic norms. In an interview which appeared in Milan's *Corriere della sera*, he even affirmed the need to maintain NATO as a shield of Italy's freedom—though his own party's daily, *L'Unità*, omitted that line in reprinting the interview.

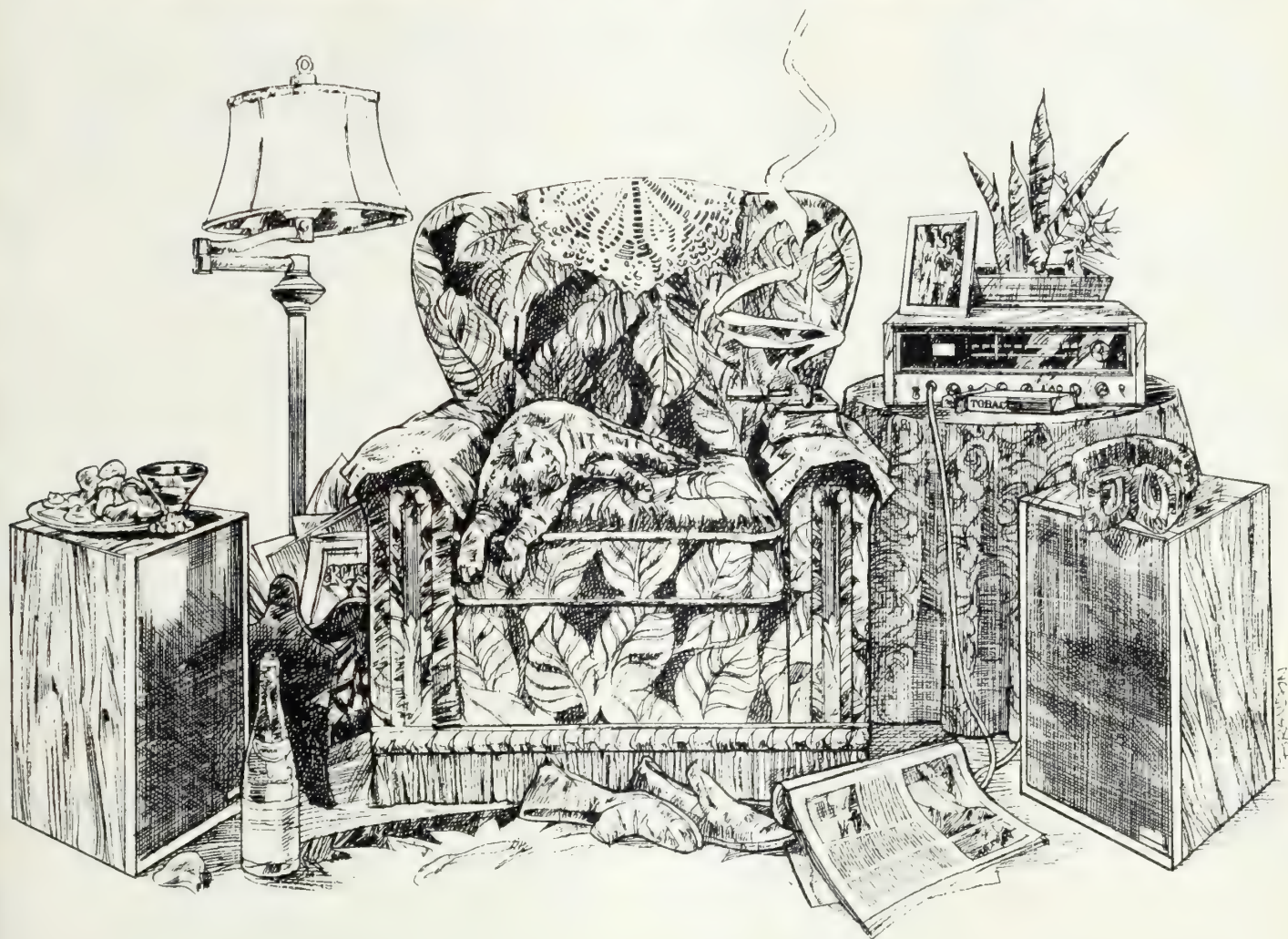
The fact is that the Communists do have a stake in preserving democracy. They could not govern Italy alone—and they know it. If, in a democracy, they risk being voted out of office, in a Soviet-style Communist state the risks of falling out of favor are more drastic. The Christian Democrats have no less a stake in seeking Communist cooperation. Without the collaboration of the unions, they have little hope of governing Italy with any degree of effectiveness.

The "historic compromise" would still be a tenuous proposition, but less so than a continuation of misgovernment. And if the Italians were to succeed in integrating their Communists into a democratic system as responsible partners, they would be giving Communism its long-sought human face. That would be fitting: the Italians, after all, are very human.

Incidentally, the Czechoslovak team won the soccer championship. The Germans evened the score with a brilliant corner play twenty seconds before the final whistle. Two overtime periods failed to break the tie. Then, as the two teams began the series of penalty kicks that would decide the game, a friend came in with some election news. We waved him aside. The fifth German player shot wide of the goal, the fifth Czechoslovak scored. The game over, we were ready to listen.



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# CALLING TO THE YAHOO

OFFICE OF

## SENATOR WILLIAM PROXMIRE

WISCONSIN

FOR RELEASE AFTER 6:30 A.M. TUESDAY, MARCH 11, 1975 FOR TUESDAY PM

Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) said on Tuesday, "My choice for the biggest waste of the taxpayer's money for the month of March has to be the National Science Foundation's squandering of \$84,000 to try to find out why people fall in love."

In search of publicity, a flamboyant Senator pulls the wool over his constituents' eyes  
by Vic Gold

*A \$57,800 study of the body measurements of airline stewardess trainees by the Federal Aviation Administration sizes up as my Golden Fleece of the Month award for August. The study was done ostensibly for the design of safety equipment, but the 103-page report dealing with 70 measurements from head to foot seems like a bust to me.*

—Sen. William Proxmire

ONCE REVEILED for his Ludite irreverence toward such Establishment tools as the American banker and Pentagon brass, the man who took Joe McCarthy's Senate seat in the summer of 1957 has more recently emerged as a hero of *The Conservative Digest*, a Capitol Hill leader to be emulated by right-wing and reborn populist Congressmen with a taste for publicity.

By every existential measure, of course, there is a vast distance between the careers of William Proxmire and his predecessor:

- McCarthy trained on booze and went to an early grave with a necrotic liver; Proxmire jogs five miles to work each morning, capping that ordeal with a high-protein breakfast of sardines (one can, no more).
- At age forty, McCarthy ran to baldness and jowls; Proxmire, at sixty, is juvenescent, the result of a well-publicized face-lift and hair transplant.
- McCarthy managed to do no more than slog through Marquette Law School; Proxmire holds three de-

grees in economics and business administration, one from Yale, a pair from Harvard.

• McCarthy was the Republican scourge of the fellow travelers; Proxmire was elected as a liberal Democrat, the terror of Wall Street.

So much for existential differences; for on another level the two Senators from Wisconsin are professional kin, sharing skills developed through playing the Progressive-cum-Know-Nothing role that characterizes their state's schizoid political identity (McCarthy, though a right-winger, had a good Fair Deal voting record on farm and other domestic legislation). The particular talent they share is a knack for transforming the essence of complex public issues into broad entertainment for the Yahoo masses.

McCarthy's contributions to this process are well recorded, his name immortalized as an *ism*; Proxmire's are less so, though God and the Capitol Hill press corps know that Wild Bill—as the chairman of the Banking Committee and Appropriations Subcommittee on HUD Independent Agencies is called by bemused colleagues—tries his damndest, given the material at hand. Indeed, granted the operation of the fastest mimeograph in the Senate and the corps's unsated demand for superficial news leads, Proxmire can be sure of his niche in the pantheon of irresponsible demagogues—for his great Golden Fleece act, if nothing else.

*Vic Gold is writing a book about the public-relations aspects of the 1976 campaign.*

THE GOLDEN FLEECE, by now a monthly item for television and radio newsrooms, originated in early 1975, following a series of opinion polls which clearly indicated, for all but the most nostalgic of New Deal-era liberals, a backlash against increased government expenditures. Shrewdly anticipating media interest in the antibureaucracy theme of this year's Presidential race, Proxmire directed his staff to come up with an idea that could provide him running, rather than single-shot, press coverage on federal spending excesses.

What evolved—at first called the Fickle Finger, then changed to Golden Fleece to accommodate Middle American sensibilities—is a regular mimeographed handout which cites "the biggest or most ridiculous or most ironic example of government waste" brought to Proxmire's attention during the preceding thirty days.

The truth behind this language is that Proxmire staffers hungrily scan reports from the National Science Foundation and other independent agencies looking for federal grants which will lend themselves to the Yahoo penchant for mocking the abstract and newfangled. Specifically, one such "example of government waste" meant the depiction of an anthropometric study of aircraft cabin safety as a comic boondoggle.

Between 1964 and 1970, sixty-six flight attendants were killed and eighty-nine seriously injured in commercial crashes in the United States. According to the Federal Aviation



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Administration study that "seemed like a bust" to Proxmire, these casualties were mainly the result of equipment deficiencies, such as ill-fitting stewardess shoulder harnesses, which caused—quoting the report itself—"strangulation, broken shoulders and internal injuries."

Not the sort of data easily convertible into laughs. But Proxmire's ingenuity in such cases is outdone only by his insensitivity. The show, after all, must go on; to the extent that the information contained in the FAA study was selectively winnowed into a string of infantile one-liners, e.g., "A waist breadth, waist circumference and waist depth is just plain waste."

Boola-boola, hee-haw. The stewardess measurement story made the national news wires, providing innumerable local TV anchormen with their obligatory "bright" for the day; not a single reporter troubled to dig into the full import of the study.

Most Golden Fleece releases have profited from similar coverage, or lack of it, and no questions have been asked about Proxmire's hyperbolic cost estimates. One early 1976 "award" charged the National Safety Foundation with lavishly investing \$46,000 in a report describing "how male drivers react to pretty girls crossing the street." Subsequent protests that the Senator had pulled out of context one minuscule aspect of a comprehensive study of the causes of urban violence were drowned in coast-to-coast gales of "happy news" chortling.

Thus, though his routine on first impression seems less pernicious than McCarthy's, the Proxmire technique is nevertheless reminiscent of it. And in 1976, much as two decades ago, the flack's truism still stands: no demagogue ever lost a headline by underestimating the Capitol Hill news media's taste for "expose" items with a Yahoo zinger.

**T**HE FIRST Golden Fleece was inflicted in March 1975 on Dr. Ellen Berscheid of the University of Minnesota. She had been funded to research psychological factors underlying the country's growing divorce rate. Proxmire lampooned that, and related NSF research grants totaling \$86,000, as "the Federal love machine." He

recommended, to the giggles of an appreciative staff (the Senator provides many of his own punch lines and types his own releases), that esoteric matters such as "why people fall in love" be "left to Elizabeth Barrett Browning." Broken shoulders, broken homes—same difference, so long as you leave 'em rolling in the aisles back in Oshkosh.

Not long after, a \$110,000 National Institute of Drug Abuse study headed by Dr. Harold Rubin of Southern Illinois University was similarly cited. Rubin's vulnerable study title: "The Effects of Marijuana on Human Sexual Response."

"If we'd called it 'The Effects of Cannabis on Testosterone Production,' the son of a bitch would have walked right by," one NIDA official commented, after the House of Representatives, wanting to get into Proxmire's act, amended the 1976-77 appropriations bill to ban any inquiry into a possible link between marijuana smoking and reduced hormone levels among college students.

To date, the great pot-sex debate, which inspired such opponents of mingling sex and tax money as Rep. Wayne Hays to new heights of Yahoo rhetoric, has been Proxmire's most effective performance in what a critical fellow Senator termed "the role of grand inquisitor regarding scientific research."

"Congress is setting a precedent of turning down research proposals merely because they sound funny or we don't understand what they're intended to do," Sen. William Hathaway of Maine argued when the bill to withdraw federal funding from the Rubin study went before the Senate in May. "And we're doing this only because one Senator picked out this particular project, probably because of its title."

Probably? A Senatorial courtesy word. The likelihood of any NSF study with the word *sex* in the title escaping the Proxmire early-warning publicity net is 1 in 10,000. The man knows his market: more than half of all Golden Fleece releases have featured reports with some sexual connotation. Those awards without leering implication are larded with the stock idiom so dear to writers of cheap headlines and rhinestone populist news leads.

Nelson Rockefeller's new Vice-Presidential residence, an inevitable

recipient, was described as a "posh, plush pleasure palace"; Federal Energy Administrator Frank Zarb was tagged a "winged wastrel of energy," flitting about the country in a "plush jet"; the nation's capital, in the world Proxmire outlines to his slack-jawed constituency, is inhabited by "government big shots" who "live high off the hog"; other loose-living squanderers of federal funds are "well-heeled" and are said to frequent "plush watering holes."

*Plush, posh, posh, plush*—those are the news-making fillips. The deeper political thrust of the Golden Fleece proceeds from what Proxmire cynically understands as a Yahoo disdain for any long-range, egghead, scientific project that costs more than a carton of Bull Durham roll-your-own and does not promise instant, tangible benefits. Numerous awards have therefore gone to researchers who "waste" federal funds indulging the highfalutin foolishness of using animal specimens for physiological testing.

"The National Science Foundation should operate under a system of rigorous priorities," says Proxmire, "expending the taxpayers' money only in those areas where there is *an urgent need to know*." (Emphasis supplied.)

By that standard, a special NSF-NASA joint grant to study the symptoms of stress—as they might occur in astronauts and ghetto dwellers—was represented in a Golden Fleece release as a test to find out why monkeys grind their teeth ("It's time for the Federal government to get out of the 'monkey business,'" guffawed Proxmire); a research grant by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism became a thigh-slapping case of spending money "to turn rats into alcoholics" ("It is time for the NIAAA to take a hard sober look at its research priorities").

**W**HAT IS "RIDICULOUS" about such testing procedures, Proxmire explains, is that "the most effective way to understand human conditions and problems is to observe human behavior." That, however, is precisely what brought the Berscheid and Rubin experiments to grief. But in the theater of the Yahoo, the eggheads should by now



now their role: to catch it coming and going in those plush, posh ivory towers.

To be sure, scientists (especially social scientists) are not insulated from questioning regarding their research. Guidelines and limits to government-funded studies—even those bearing such titles as “Dependency Interpersonal Attraction”—should be open to discussion; indeed, Congress has special procedures to scrutinize NSF fund requests on a regular basis. But in considering these matters, as Hathaway vainly tried to convince his Senate colleagues, one must be aware that, by its very nature, basic scientific inquiry is “tasteful” when put to the test of Wharton School of Finance systems analysis, and that the NSF was specifically created to underwrite projects not likely to attract funding from private institutions primarily interested in research for its pragmatic value.

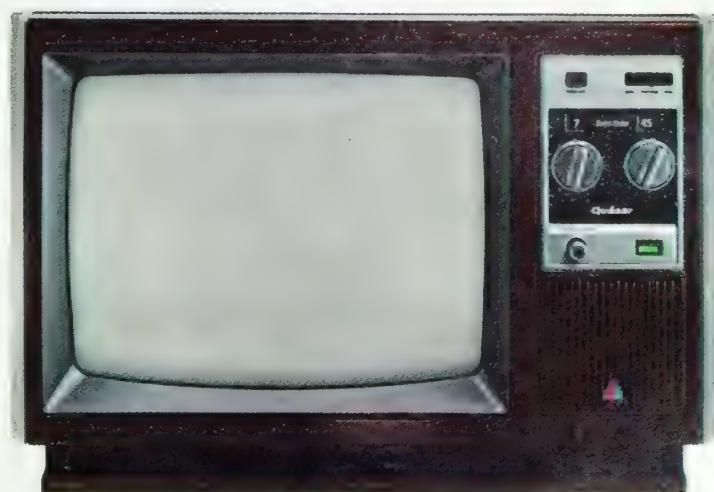
Beyond these substantive questions, however, there is a higher “priority” consideration regarding the future of free inquiry in a free society, namely, that even if in certain Golden Fleece cases Proxmire’s ends might be justified, his means are not.

NSF officials, fearing Wild Bill’s retaliatory powers much as State and Defense Department officials once cowered at the mention of McCarthy, curiously prefer to speak without attribution when discussing their Senate overseer’s methods. But more recently, several victimized scientists have grown bold in their criticism. Dr. Ronald Hutchinson, charging professional character assassination, actually filed suit against the Wisconsin Senator for ridicule suffered, according to the complaint, as a result of the “monkey business” case. (Taxpayers, thanks to a Senatorial courtesy vote, will be billed for the cost of Proxmire’s defense.) And Dr. Rubin, with nothing to lose from the federal government following the pot-sex vote, bluntly accused Congress of “promoting ignorance in the name of wisdom.”

What I see,” said Rubin, “is a potentially stifling effect on creative research in America.”

He might have gone further and given it a name for the times: Proxmireism. □

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# A PLAGUE OF LAWYERS

by Jerold S. Auerbach

As the laws multiply, so also does the civilization decay

**N**OT FROGS OR GNATS, flies or boils, hail or locusts, persuaded Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go. It is foolhardy to question divine wisdom, but it is at least arguable that some difference between gnats and locusts, and surely the death of the firstborn shattered Pharaoh's stubborn resolve, a plague of lawyers would have been enough.

That God spared Egypt Americans inflict on themselves. At the beginning of this century there was approximately one lawyer for every 1,100 Americans. Twenty-five years later the ratio was 1:700. Now it is 1:530. In 1970 the population has grown by 6 percent, but there has been a 14 percent spurt in the size of the legal profession. A steady stream of law students (53,000 in 1950) increased by 1968 (68,000) to become a flood (77,000) just three years ago. By the time we celebrate our tricentennial, at these rates, we will be fortunate indeed if any Americans but lawyers are alive to see it.

No other country in history, or in the world today, has shared our obsession with lawyers. Israel (1:670) comes closest; Finland, Greece, Japan, and some South American countries follow; Canada and England round out the top ten. Other Western industrial nations—France, West Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands—are well down the list. At the bot-

tom are the Asian, Moslem, and African nations. This suggests a pattern to which modernization provides one important clue. Thus Lebanon (like Israel, an anomaly beside its Arab neighbors) has had a substantially higher proportion of lawyers than the Muslim nations. Yet it is not modernization alone that breeds lawyers. Urban industrial Japan has quite a low ratio (1:10,300), higher only than the new nations of Africa and the People's Republic of China. Modernization seems to generate lawyers only if, as in Israel and Lebanon, it is infused with Western expertise, capital, and personnel. The modern Western nations that most closely resemble the United States, however, have managed to survive with substantially fewer lawyers. Even England, from which Magna Carta, trial by jury, *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce*, and other Anglo-Saxon legal blessings flow, has a ratio only one-third as high as ours.

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## Legal piety

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**I**T COMES AS NO SURPRISE to discover still another example of American uniqueness. The belief (or conceit) that we are, and ought to be, special is deeply embedded in our national character. Partial as we also are to size, growth, and

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A PLAGUE OF  
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quantity, it follows that more of anything is better. Therefore, more lawyers are as commendable as more automobiles, even if we pollute our public life (and private lives) in the process by encouraging people to act as if every human problem had a legal solution. This may suggest that, as lawyers multiply, civilization crumbles. But our bloated legal profession is merely a symptom, not a disease. Unlike the biblical plagues, it is self-inflicted, not superimposed. It does not mold our culture so much as it reflects basic American values. If we hold it up to ourselves as a mirror, we can (if we can stand the sight) easily discern our consuming individualism, unrelenting contentiousness, and discordant heterogeneity. We can, in short, see one divided nation, under lawyers, with liberty and justice for some.

Five hundred years from now, when historians sift through twentieth-century artifacts, they doubtlessly will be as uncomprehending of our legal piety as we are of medieval religious piety. In fact, there is more than a slight resemblance between the pre-Reformation medieval church and the contemporary American bench and bar. Law is our national religion; lawyers constitute our priesthood. Legal ritual now, like religious ritual in the fifteenth century, provides coherence and form within a disorderly, chaotic universe. A trial, with its controlled forms of address, cross-examination, and procedural orderliness, offers a comforting framework to dispel feelings of helplessness and fears of randomness. The bar, like the church, relies upon mysterious language and procedures to instill reverence and to remove itself from the people. As Latin was the language of the Mass, so it remains embedded in the language of the law, serving as a reminder to the uninitiated that what may be gibberish to them is *res ipsa loquitur* to a lawyer. The black robes of bishop and judge clothe mere mortals with the power of the Lord or the law. The courtroom is our cathedral, where contemporary passion plays are enacted. In both buildings silence, awe, and deference—if not subservience—placate the authorities. Solemnity is most characteristic of the Supreme Court, where government lawyers traditionally appeared in cutaways and striped pants to present their arguments. Because priests and lawyers constitute classes of certified experts who monopolize access to pivotal social institutions, they are both respected and mistrusted. As the priest mediated between man and God for the salvation of souls, so the lawyer manipulates a different form of life after death (through trusts and wills). The lawyer may even have

an edge, purgatory constituting a slightly better fate than dying intestate. Purgatory, after all, is for the sinner alone, but the omission of a will dooms generations of descendants.

If history repeats itself, as it occasionally does, there may be an instructive parallel for our own time in the medieval experience. As the church grew in size and complexity, redoubling its acquisitive energies as it lost sight of its pietistic purpose, it became crippled by inertia and riddled with corruption. Priests capitalized upon their monopoly of salvation to sell forgiveness. They charged fees, or indulgences, for burials, probate wills, and the administration of the sacraments. Obviously, the larger a believer's purse, the more direct his journey to heaven. The situation bears an uncanny resemblance to the cartoon in which an attorney reassures his anxious client about the substantial merits of his case, and inquires, "How much justice can you afford?"

As ceremonial mystery deteriorated, corrupt authority Martin Luther broke through forms to substance—always a dangerous threat to any priestly class. Luther demanded direct communication between God and man, without church intervention. In perhaps the unkindest cut he declared that all believers were priests. Luther's reforms brought substantial benefits: simplified services and translation of the Bible from Latin to the more widely comprehensible French, German, and English. Theology was demystified and transferred into the public realm, where not only the privileged priesthood but mere mortals could participate in salvation.

A Luther of the law would discover an equally encrusted institution, no less certain of its rectitude and no less committed to preservation of privilege and power. In the twentieth century, as in the fifteenth, form superseded substance. Now it is justice, the secular equivalent of salvation, which is for a fee. Now it is lawyers who corrupt the temple. The long roster of Watergate lawyers convicted for obstruction of justice or perjury does not even include Richard Nixon, although pardoned by an alumnus of Law School, was recently disbarred in New York. Assertions of lay competence (how to avoid probate without retaining a lawyer) elicit howls of outrage from our contemporary salesmen of indulgences. Efforts to simplify procedure and ease recovery of damages in fault insurance) rally lawyers to do battle for their fees. Imagine someone intelligent enough to suggest that the language of a contract be subjected to the test of lay comprehension, or that good moral character



ular nineteenth-century standard) suffice qualification to practice law. He would ly be committed, with a lawyer at his side protect his rights (if not his soul).

■ T IS ASTONISHING that lawyers any- where, no less in the United States, should ascend to eminence, or even to ■ conspicuousness. Hostility to the legal ession is as old as the profession itself. ancients believed that lawyers had a ed interest (their fees) in manipulating isinterpreting tribal custom and prophetic

teaching. In early Greece, republican Rome, and dynastic China there were rules against the provision of paid legal advice. The rebel Jack Cade, in Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part Two*, asked: "Is not this a lamentable thing, that of the skin of an innocent lamb should be made parchment? that parchment, being scribbled o'er, should undo a man?" How- ever lamentable, lawyers continued to fleece innocent lambs. Modern revolutionary move- ments—often led by lawyers, such as Robes- pierre and Lenin, who understood profession- al conservatism—have sought to destroy the legal profession: the French abolished the

**"The bar, like the church, relies upon mysterious language and procedures to instill reverence and to remove itself from the people."**





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## A PLAGUE OF LAWYERS

Order of Advocates and the Bolsheviks destroyed the Russian Advokatura.

Mistrust crossed the Atlantic with the earliest settlers in America, whose Edenic vision consigned lawyers to a role slightly above the biblical serpent. The *Fundamental Constitutions* of Carolina declared it "a base and vile thing to plead for money or reward." In Massachusetts the *Body of Liberties* permitted anyone who could not plead his own cause to retain someone else for assistance, "Provided he give him noe fee or reward for his paines." Both Massachusetts and Rhode Island prohibited lawyers from serving in their colonial assemblies. Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard* echoed the popular complaint: "'Tis the Fee directs the Sense to make out either side's Pretense." Colonists referred to a lawyer-bird, with its long bill, and a lawyer-fish, which was slippery. Yet suspicion was no deterrent to the expansion of the colonial bar. Not long after independence, the Frenchman Crèvecoeur described American lawyers as weeds "that will grow in any soil that is cultivated by the hands of others; and when once they have taken root, they will extinguish every other vegetable that grows around them."

A democratic society, Tocqueville wisely observed nearly half a century later, nurtured the political power of lawyers. Once aristocracy, nobility, and royalty were excluded from politics, lawyers were "the only men of information and sagacity, beyond the sphere of the people," who might be chosen for public office. Tocqueville appreciated the ability of lawyers "to neutralize the vices inherent in popular government." Their sobriety and conservatism provided ballast amid democratic turbulence.

It was not merely the absence of aristocracy that thrust American lawyers into prominence. In traditional societies roles were defined, stable relationships were encouraged, and mutual responsibility was valued. In the United States people stood apart, separated from ancestors, contemporaries, and descendants. Individualism meant freedom, but it also meant solitariness, even loneliness. Here, Tocqueville wrote, people "acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone and they are apt to imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands."

Destiny might have been there in the open, mobile, simple society of our first century. But the concentration of institutional and economic power in the modern era, however, individuals often could not stand alone, and individualism became the mask for the privileged few who got there first rather than the assurance of opportunity for all. By the end of the nineteenth century American society

was diverse, contentious, and unstable. Success, measured by money, was the tangible sign of God's favor—reserved, appropriately for respectable young men with white skin, middle-class fathers, and Anglo-Saxon origin. As social discord increased, old elites zealous guarded their privileged enclaves against immigrant newcomers, with their unfamiliar names, faces, accents, and manners. Class conflict erupted spasmodically, although Americans were uncomfortable with the label, which contradicted their ideology if not the experience. The only social ethic, ironically, was competitive individualism, upheld in accordance with the loose ground rules of the Darwinian struggle. This restless movement and relentless grasping were directed toward one overriding purpose: money. A democratic nation could stratify its members only according to wealth and poverty.

In this setting lawyers were sucked even deeper into the power vacuum. When ever one was encouraged to make his own way at the expense of everyone else, the rich and powerful did not have to rely on their own six-shooters; they had the advantage of the hired gun. Lawyers were perfectly suited to play this role, which American society was uniquely endowed to provide for them. The rule of law provided the only social cement to hold a fearful and fractured society together—as long as no one bothered to inquire why in the land of equal justice, some were more equal than others.

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### Quid pro quo

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**M**ODERN PROFESSIONAL training has been sensitively attuned to the rule of law and to the myth of equal justice. Resting precariously on the false (but reassuring) metaphor of law as science, legal education for more than a century has strengthened inequity under the guise of neutrality. It elevates process over substance; competence over conscience; form over substance. These choices, disguised as value-free, ratify a delicate quid pro quo between lawyers and society, which provides that the size and power of the legal profession may grow, in return for assurances that lawyers are merely craftsmen, professionally competent but politically uncommitted.

Each year almost 100,000 students are taught to think like lawyers. Teaching someone who for twenty-one years has thought like a person to think like a lawyer is no mean achievement. The lesson requires suspension of belief that right and wrong have any meaning.





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ing beyond what the adversary process and legal system decide. (As Johnson told Boswell: "A cause is neither good nor bad 'til the Judge determines it.") It insists that no result can be more important than the legal processes by which all results must be reached. It rests on the proposition that the social good has no content beyond the assertion of individual rights, funneled laboriously through labyrinthine channels of procedure which only lawyers can navigate. In this curious vacuum society exists without groups; thoughts are independent of theory; events occur without pattern. The legal mind must be trained to comprehend no more than the individual client and the concrete case. (That mind, a law teacher once explained, can think of something that is inextricably connected to something else without thinking about what it is connected to.) In medical school, this operation is called a lobotomy; in law school, recovery is rewarded with a JD degree.

There is a diabolical circularity to it all. A society in which individual rights are paramount requires an abundance of lawyers to defend and process them. In a society where lawyers abound, contentious individualism flourishes. Americans are as hooked on lawyers as are lawyers on clients. This arrangement is functional in much the same, self-destructive way that a neurosis is functional: as individual rights are protected, social fragmentation accelerates. It is also filled with contradictions. An individualistic society emphasizes rights, yet reserves them for citizens who assert them and can afford to pay for them. So lawyers, who belong to a public profession with broad social responsibilities, proclaim client loyalty as their highest obligation (when they really cherish loyalty to a client's fee). Similarly, the adversary system, with two combatants in every legal ring, is ill equipped to consider the social good, beyond the implicit assumption that every fight and any winner is good for society. But in any system where the wealthy and powerful have overwhelming advantages, the social good, in the end, usually means no more than what is good for General Motors. (Or its counterparts: in 1971 the First National City Corporation paid \$2 million in legal fees to its New York law firm, and twenty-five other companies paid more than \$500,000 to theirs. Occasionally individuals hire the biggest guns: Jacqueline Onassis was billed \$400,000 by her firm, whose senior partner, according to some accounts, bills at \$250 per hour; when she refused to pay, the firm—of course—sued.) Additionally, the particularism of legal inquiry, directed from the general to the specific and from society to

client, obliterates critical scrutiny of social institutions. That, of course, is precisely what any wealthy client, abetted by his lawyer's mastery of the tax code, fervently desires.

Once client loyalty, the adversary system and professional tunnel vision merge, the primary beneficiary is the status quo of maldistributed opportunity, benefits, wealth, and power. That is no accident. A legal system inevitably absorbs the values of the society that nurtures it. With consummate skill ours combines the expansive promise of equal justice with the constricted reality of justice for a fee. To conceal the disparity, the fairness of the adversary system and the neutrality of lawyers must be accepted as articles of faith. For the most part, they are. The victims are relatively silent because they are relatively powerless. They are isolated from each other, from any sense of common identity, and from access to those who control the levers of legal redress whose services they cannot afford in any case. On rare occasions when an innovation such as the class-action suit emerges, enabling an entire group of aggrieved persons to pool their meager individual resources and exert leverage, the courts quickly step in to impede their effort. One decision required litigants, at their own considerable expense, to notify all class members that legal action was pending. Other suits were dismissed because they were "unmanageable," i.e., they threatened corporations with liability to millions of consumer victims.

So the plague spreads, and is perceived as a blessing in disguise. More Americans than ever before rush to become lawyers; the new career of paraprofessional is created to absorb the overflow; the few remaining lay deviants hasten to retain lawyers. Litigation is the characteristic remedy provided by our society to its aggrieved members. Few Americans, it seems, can tolerate more than five minutes of frustration without submitting to the temptation to sue. (Last season, for example, Washington football fans sued a referee after a disputed call on a touchdown pass.) With grievance too insignificant, it is little wonder that despairing reformers since the turn of the century have wrestled with, and been defeated by, the problem of overcrowded dockets and the consequent delays that deny justice to those who cannot afford to wait.

Every problem seems to have the identical solution. If a doctor does not heal, the patient brings a malpractice suit. If a financially leaguered university dismisses faculty, its chief administrator declares: "The university will be in litigation for decades over this. It will be a lawyers' paradise." If the President comm



gh crimes and misdemeanors, sue him for tapes. If the legal profession refuses to permit advertising, sue the American Bar Association for violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. (In an appropriate twist of irony, the Department of Justice has done just that.)

**T**HE UNITED STATES is a lawyers' paradise. So much of our institutional thought and language is legalistic that it is accepted without question. Legese, aided and abetted by bureaucratic circumlocution, fills our vocabulary with what the Law Prof. Fred Rodell long ago labeled "fuzzy-wuzzy words." We give full faith and credit to the terminology of lawyers; only if they were to cease and desist would we deem it fit and proper to take notice. Elsewhere legal language may run the risk of losing contact with ordinary language, but in the United States it is the ordinary language, imprisoning all of us in its archaisms, redundancies, and evasive evasiveness, while channeling thought into the limited choices that law provides.

Precisely because law so pervades American culture, legal careers have served as the surest passports to success, except for inherited wealth. Students who flock to law school know only the vaguest notions about law practice, but they do have an accurate appreciation that a law degree will certify them as expert experts in the art of problem-solving. At the very least, they can always go to work for problem-solving government agencies created by the previous generation of problem-solving lawyers. For ambitious students, there is always the hope of a career in politics. With nearly two-thirds of our Presidents, a majority of Congressmen, and all Supreme Court justices lawyers, absence of a law degree is almost as effective a disqualifier for high office as being nonwhite or female. Much of our nearly distrust of Jimmy Carter may be attributable to his lack of legal credentials. Americans can tolerate lawyers as priests, but they distrust evangelical politicians. A legalistic culture becomes suspicious when love and compassion intrude.

It is odd that a low estimate of lawyers would yield a consistently high proportion of them in public office, it seems even stranger that in a law-obsessed society should be so lawless. The essence of legalism is obedience to the law, yet American history is so replete with episodes of lawlessness in defense of law that it is difficult to discern any line separating the two. Appropriately, the only American frontier figure with more luster than the sheriff is the outlaw, condemned at the time and

adored by everyone since. From the James brothers, through Bonnie and Clyde, to Patty Hearst, the outlaw as hero or heroine has remained a riveting figure in American popular culture. Back when lynching bees were almost as popular as spelling bees, vigilantism—the favorite extralegal device for preserving law and order—was enthusiastically praised by community leaders, occasionally including Presidents, judges, and lawyers.

The violence of law enforcement is no less incongruous. Even Americans with short memories recall the police riots of the Sixties, or Attica prison, where more Americans were killed by other Americans (who happened to be law-enforcement officers) than in any single episode since soldiers massacred Indians in the late nineteenth century. Disobedience produces such excessive retaliation in our law-abiding society that the law enforcers become more lawless than the lawbreakers ever were. These days the FBI has surely violated more laws than the political targets of its lawless wiretappings and burglaries ever did. Perhaps it was only coincidental that the most lawless Presidential administration in our history was elected to preserve law and order. Yet it seemed curiously appropriate and, therefore, not accidental that the higher the government official implicated in Watergate crimes, the more leniently he was treated. Ours is, after all, a government of . . . laws?

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### Legality or justice?

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**T**HERE IS AN inescapable relationship between our legalism and our lawlessness. Neither vanishes because the other exists; both tap a common source in our culture: the compulsive individualism, reinforced by materialism, that is the glory and bane of our national existence. As long as Americans remain a fragmented people, they will search for the elusive binding cohesion of the rule of law (with sprinklings of patriotism and anti-Communism reserved for critical moments). But just so long will substantial numbers of them break laws which thwart their individualistic yearnings. To offset disobedience we will enact more laws. To protect rights we will need more lawyers. Since more rules mean a greater probability of rule violation, the more strident will be the claim that with just a few more laws, and lawyers for those who cannot now afford them, all will be well. But all will not be well. The vicious cycle will merely have been accelerated.

If there is any solace in this dismal diagnosis it is that there may be no preferable

**"Our response to the crisis in legal authority is new laws and more lawyers. Yet the acute, unresolved tension between legality and justice remains."**



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alternative—or so, at least, we would like to believe. Throughout this century social theorists have taught us that a formal legal system, with a trained professional class, offers distinct advantages over its competitors. Submission to the authority of “law prophets” (Moses or Mohammed), or “charismatic law creators” (Lenin or Hitler), has limited appeal. The transition from unchecked theocratic or secular authority to the administration of a legal elite is counted as one of the undisputed blessings in the evolution of modern Western civilization. It marked the triumph of formal justice, with its rationality, consistency, impersonality, and predictability, over arbitrariness and instability. These virtues were crucial to the development of a modern capitalist economy, which needed to exclude personal and irrational calculations from its cost-benefit calculations. Yet the price of progress is high. The cost of professional legal services puts justice beyond the reach of the poor. Only the ruling class is secure within a formal legal system.

The survival of formal legalism in the West depends upon its ability to disguise its bias and persuade laymen that the profusion of laws, procedures, and lawyers contributes to a just society. The United States is the best test case, since nowhere else is there such an intricate, sophisticated legal culture; yet no other country, in recent years, has experienced such a sustained crisis of legal authority—short of revolutionary upheaval. Our response, characteristically, is new laws, more lawyers, and the forlorn hope that lawyers will teach themselves professional responsibility. Yet the acute, unresolved tension between legality and justice remains. The have-nots, less well served by legal formalism than the haves, want expanded equality of opportunity, perhaps even equality of results. Our formal legal system cannot provide this because our society will not tolerate it. A move toward substantive justice would generate a major redistribution of political and economic power, which might ultimately subvert the legal system itself.

Short of extensive social renovation resting upon a different economic foundation, the only choice is to accept the legal framework, however constricting it is, and provide legal services to anyone who needs them. Then it can be argued that, even if the results are not equitable, at least the process is fair. This remains an elusive goal in a society with our values. We might subsidize legal services for all members, but that notion contradicts our faith in self-help. Or we could compel lawyers to donate several years of practice to public service, at the risk of violating our belief in

voluntarism. We might even authorize resolution of disputes in people's courts mediated by neighborhood arbitrators—if we could withstand the fury of a bench and bar stripped of its privileged monopoly. Since every alternative cuts against the grain of one fundamental precept or another, equal justice will continue to serve as the sacrificial lamb.

Mired in our legalistic swamp, we are easy prey for lawyers. Certainly the privileged beneficiaries of the legal culture—primarily the corporations that pay the highest retainer fees—are not clamoring to relinquish their advantages. Probably most Americans would be apprehensive at the thought of diminishing the supply of lawyers, since we have all been persuaded that the more there are, the more protection there is for more people. (This is more reassuring than true, since lawyers are not as widely distributed through American society as the figures might imply; nor are they available to people in all socioeconomic and ethnic groups. There is only one lawyer for every 7,000 poor Americans. The ratio of Chicano lawyers to Chicanos is 1:14,000; projected internationally, that figure would place them near the African nations at the bottom of the list.) The plague may be our terminal illness, but Americans probably prefer the disease to any cure that would purge us of our individualistic, materialistic, competitive traits.

It is not surprising that utopian visionaries expel lawyers from their paradise. There is little use for their services, or tolerance for the arts and craft, in cohesive, cooperative communities. On an Israeli kibbutz, for example, the sanctions of community opinion replace police, lawyers, and prisons. All the problems of human intercourse remain, but the procedures for resolving them reflect the mores of cooperation and common purpose. Disputes are mediated by a respected community member; neither party feels aggrieved without counsel. The lay members of the kibbutz welfare committee make final decisions, from which there is no judicial review. Expulsion is the ultimate sanction—precisely as it was in seventeenth-century Massachusetts, when deviants such as Roger Williams became obstreperous to Puritan wanderers in the New World wilderness.

Modern America could not easily survive the absence of lawyers. They not only sustain and profit from its rapacious individualism; simultaneously, they commit the society to legalistic values, which offer the only thin veneer of unity that Americans can tolerate. As James Cade's fellow rebel suggested: “The first thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers.” The problem for Americans, is what to do next.



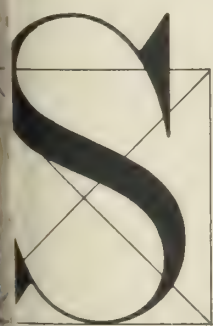
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# CALIFORNIA BLUE

by Joan Didion

A Book of Common Prayer is about an American woman named Charlotte Douglas who dies in a Central American country called Boca Grande. She is the wife of a San Francisco lawyer, Leonard Douglas. By her first husband, Warren Bogart, she has a daughter named Marin. The narrator in these excerpts is another American woman, Grace Strasser-Mendana, who was trained as an anthropologist, married into a powerful Central American family, and was left by her husband's death "in relative control of 59.8 percent of the arable land and about the same percentage of the decision-making process in La Republica de Boca Grande." She is trying here to reconstruct the events which preceded Charlotte Douglas's arrival in Boca Grande.



SOME OF WHAT I KNOW about Marin Bogart's disappearance I know from Charlotte. Some of it I know from Leonard Douglas. Some of it I know from having once seen Warren Bogart and some of it I know from having once seen Marin but most of what I know, the most reliable part of what I know, derives from my training in

human behavior.

do not mean my training under Kroeber at California nor with Lévi-Strauss at São Paulo.

I mean my training in being *de afuera*, an outsider. I am *de afuera*. I have been *de afuera* all my life. It is a little more than a year now since Charlotte Douglas's death and almost two years since her arrival in Boca Grande.

Charlotte Douglas's death.

Charlotte Douglas's murder.

Neither word works.

Charlotte Douglas's previous engagement.



THE MORNING THE FBI MEN first came to the house on California Street Charlotte did not understand why. She had read newspaper accounts of the events they recited, she listened attentively to everything they said, but she could make no connection between the pitiless revolutionist they described and Marin, who at seven

had stood on a chair to make her own breakfast and wept helplessly when asked to clean her closet.

Sweet Marin.

Who at sixteen had been photographed with her two best friends wearing the pink-and-white candy-striped pinafores of Children's Hospital volunteers, and had later abandoned her Saturdays at the hospital as "too sad."

Soft Marin.

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Joan Didion is the author of *Run River*, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, and *Play It As It Lays*. This section has been adapted from her most recent novel, *A Book of Common Prayer*, which will be published early next year by Simon and Schuster.

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Who at eighteen had been observed with her four best friends detonating a crude pipe bomb in the lobby of the Transamerica Building at 6:30 A.M., hijacking a P.S.A. L-1011 at San Francisco Airport and landing it at Wendover, Utah, where they burned it in time for the story to interrupt the network news and disappeared.

Marin.

Or so the two FBI men tried to tell Charlotte.

Marin.

Marin, who was at that moment, even as the two FBI men occupied Leonard's Barcelona chairs, even as the fat FBI man toyed with one of Leonard's porcelain roses and even as the thin FBI man gazed over Charlotte's head at the ten-by-sixteen-foot silk screen of Mao Tse-tung given to Leonard by one of the Alameda Three, skiing at Squaw Valley.

Or so Charlotte tried to tell the fat FBI man.

The thin one did not seem to be listening.

I am talking here about a day in November one year before the day in November when Charlotte Douglas first appeared in Boca Grande.

Three or four things I know about Charlotte.

As a child of comfortable family in the temperate zone she had been as a matter of course provided with clean sheets, orthodontia, lamb chops, living grandparents, attentive godparents, one brother named Dickie, ballet lessons, and casual timely information about menstruation and the care of flat silver, as well as with a small wooden angel, carved in Austria, to sit on her bed table and listen to her prayers. In these prayers the child Charlotte routinely asked that "it" turn out all right, "it" being unspecified and all-inclusive, and she had been an adult for some years before the possibility occurred to her that "it" might not. She had put this doubt from her mind. As a child of the western United States she had been provided as well with faith in the value of certain frontiers on which her family had lived, in the virtues of cleared and irrigated land, of high-yield crops, of thrift, industry and the judicial system, of progress and education, and in the generally upward spiral of history. She was a *norteamericana*.

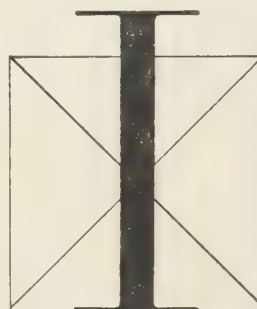
She was immaculate of history, innocent of politics. There were startling vacuums in her store of common knowledge. During the two years she spent at Berkeley before she ran away to New York with an untenured instructor named Warren Bogart, she had read mainly the Brontës and *Vogue*, bought a loom, gone home to Hollister on weekends, and slept a great deal during the week. In those two years she had entered the main library once, during a traveling exhibition of the glass flowers from Harvard. She recalled having liked the glass flowers. From books Warren Bogart gave her to read when she was twenty Charlotte learned for the first time about the Spanish Civil War, memorized the ideological distinctions among the various PSUC brigades and POUM militia, but until she was twenty-two and Warren Bogart divined and corrected her misapprehension she believed that World War II had begun at Pearl Harbor. From Leonard Douglas she had absorbed a passing fluency in Third World power, had learned what the initials meant in Algeria and Indochina and the Caribbean, but

on a blank map of the world she could not actually place the countries where the initials were in conflict. She considered the conflict dubious in any case. She understood that something was always going on in the world but believed that it would turn out all right. She believed the world to be peopled with others like herself. She associated the word *revolution* with the Boston Tea Party, one of the few events in the history of the United States prior to the westward expansion to have come to her attention. She also associated it with events in France and Russia that had probably turned out all right, otherwise why had they happened.

A not atypical *norteamericana*.

Of her time and place.

Some things about Charlotte I never understood. She was a woman who grew faint when she noticed the blue arterial veins in her wrists, could not swim in clouded water, and once suffered an attack of acute terror while wading in water where an artesian well churned up the sand. Yet during the time she was in Boca Grande I once saw her skin an iguana for stew. I once saw her make the necessary incision in the trachea of an OAS field worker who was choking on a piece of steak at the Jockey Club. A doctor had been called but the OAS man was turning blue. Charlotte did it with a boning knife plunged first into a vat of boiling rice. A few nights later the OAS man caused a scene because Charlotte refused to fellate him on the Caribe terrace, but that, although suggestive of the ambiguous signals Charlotte tended to transmit, is neither here nor there. Similarly, during the cholera outbreak that year Charlotte volunteered to give inoculations, and she did, for thirty-four hours without sleeping, until the remaining Lederle vaccine was appropriated by one of the colonels. When the colonel suggested that as a *norteamericana* she might be in a position to buy back some of the vaccine Charlotte only smiled, took off the white smock she had borrowed from the clinic, and dropped it at the colonel's feet. For the rest of that day Charlotte sat on the edge of the Caribe pool with her feet in the water and stared at the birds circling in the white sky. She did not wear dark glasses and by five o'clock the pale skin around her eyes was burned and puffy. For a few days Charlotte spoke about leaving Boca Grande, but within a week she had revised the incident to coincide with her own view of human behavior and assured me that the vaccine had been taken only so that the army could lend it resources to the inoculation program. I used to think that the only event in Charlotte Douglas's life to resist her revisions and erasures was Marin's disappearance.



INTERESTING PORTRAIT THERE," the thin FBI man said, his eyes still on the ten-by-sixteen-foot silk screen given to Leonard by one of the Alameda Three.

"Warhol," Charlotte said.

"I would have guessed Mao."

"Mao. Of course." Charlotte had no idea how one of the Alameda



three had happened to come by a Warhol silk screen. Or maybe it had not been one of the Alameda Three at all, maybe it had been one of the Tacoma Eleven or some Indian or Panther or heir to a motion-picture studio. Charlotte could never keep Leonard's clients straight. They came in packs and they ate and they asked for odd things and they went through her medicine cabinet and they borrowed and did not return her sweaters and they never addressed her directly and she could never remember their names. She wished that she could. She also wished that Marin would walk through the door of the house on California Street with a tow ticket tied to her windbreaker.

"You see you don't know Marin," she added finally. "I know her."

The fat FBI man coughed. The other examined a notebook he had picked up from a table.

"I mean I'm her mother."

"Of course you are," the fat FBI man said.

"I don't quite follow what she's saying about this Chinese couple," one of the new FBI men said. It was almost time for lunch and Charlotte had not yet eaten breakfast and the house on California Street seemed to be filling with men who spoke to each other as if Charlotte were not there. "What Chinese couple?"

"The Chinese couple who come to the house," Charlotte repeated. "And do the Peking duck."

"I don't quite follow what she's talking about."

"She's talking about caterers, Eddie, it's not a point."

"Maybe if she could run through it again. Marin arrives from Berkeley. Start there. Day before yesterday. Approximately twenty hours prior to the bombing. Marin arrives from Berkeley to—"

"To borrow a windbreaker." Charlotte spoke by rote. "To go skiing."

"To borrow a windbreaker. But she doesn't leave right away. She goes up to her room and she's up there alone. Maybe three, four hours, ball-park figure, you aren't sure which. Up in her room she—"

"You wanted her to tell it, Eddie, let her tell it."

Charlotte raised her voice. "She went through some things in her drawers."

"What things?"

"I don't know what things. She's eighteen years old, she won't go through her drawers."

"Mrs. Douglas mentioned a gold bracelet, Eddie, don't forget the gold bracelet."

"You mentioned a gold bracelet, Mrs. Douglas."

"I said she found a gold bracelet she thought she'd found."

"In a drawer."

"In a drawer, behind a drawer." There was something about the gold bracelet Charlotte wanted not to think about. Marin had dropped the bracelet on the kitchen table and told Charlotte to keep it. Marin had called the bracelet "dead metal." Charlotte wished suddenly that Marin had not mentioned the bracelet and she also wished only that Leonard were not in Nicosia. Or Damascus. Or wherever he was. He had written out the cities and hotels and the telephone numbers on a legal pad in his pajamas but Charlotte had not looked at it since he left.

Her left temple was beginning to hurt and she resented the FBI men for remembering the gold bracelet.

"Now we get to the part where I call the Chinese couple and ask them to do the Peking duck." She could hear the edge in her voice but could not control it. "All right?"

"We're back to the Chinese couple, Eddie."

"Caterers," the man the others called Eddie said.

"Not exactly," Charlotte said.

"They come to your house? They cook dinner?"

Charlotte nodded.

"Then they're caterers. Wasn't that kind of an exceptional thing to do, Mrs. Douglas, telephoning these caterers?"

"I don't quite see the exceptional part." Charlotte wished that the FBI man would not insist on calling the Chinese couple "caterers." They were not caterers, they were a couple. Under certain circumstances which had not yet arisen they might come to the house on California Street not as cooks but as guests. Charlotte knew a lot of couples like the Chinese couple who did the Peking duck. She knew the Algerian couple who did the couscous, she knew the Indonesian couple who did the rijstafel, she knew the Mexican couple who were actually second-generation Chicano but who did the authentic Mexican dinner, not common enchiladas and refried beans but exquisite recipes they had learned while vacationing at the Hotel Inglaterra in Tampico. She knew the Filipino couple, she knew the Korean couple. She had recently uncovered the Vietnamese couple. In the kitchen of the house on California Street these and other couples regularly reproduced the menus of underdeveloped countries around the world, but usually for twelve or twenty-four people. Charlotte had never before called one of these couples to cook for fewer than twelve. This time she had. That might be the exceptional part. She began to see calling the Chinese couple to do Peking duck for herself and Marin in a different light, a light not necessarily more revealing but different.

In this light the gold bracelet she had made Marin take had been too loose on Marin's wrist.

In this light Marin had been too thin and pale for a child who skied and played tennis and was supposed to have spent the week before celebrating Thanksgiving off Cabo San Lucas.

In this light Charlotte had lit the fire and turned on the record player and called the Chinese couple for the same reason she had insisted that Marin take the bracelet: to keep Marin from the harm outside.

"I mean a catered dinner for two must be quite an expensive proposition," the FBI man said.

"They're quite reasonable." Charlotte spoke automatically. "Considering."

"Catered dinner for one," the FBI man said. "Technically. Since Marin didn't stay."

"Marin had a paper to finish before she went skiing, I told you." Charlotte avoided the blank gaze of the FBI men. "She had a paper to finish for her seminar in I think *Moby Dick*."

The fat FBI man spoke for the first time since the arrival of the others. "She's not registered as a student, Mrs. Douglas, I suppose you know that."

"Actually you should try this couple." Charlotte spoke very clearly to shut out his voice. She did not know why



she had said it was a seminar in *Moby Dick*. Marin had never mentioned any seminar in *Moby Dick*.

"She hasn't been registered for two quarters, and the quarter before that she took all incompletes, but I'm sure you know this."

"I mean if you like Cantonese food at all."

*Moby Dick* had something to do with Warren.

At nineteen Charlotte had written a paper on Melville and Warren had failed her. Warren had failed her and had rung her doorbell for the first time at midnight with the paper torn in half and a bag of cherries and a bottle of bourbon and they had not left the apartment for forty-eight hours. For the first three she called him Mr. Bogart and for the next forty-five she called him nothing at all and it was not until the third day, when he took her to his apartment and asked her to clean it up and she came across the letter from the department chairman advising him that his contract would not be renewed, that she ever called him Warren.

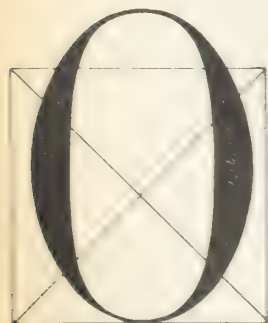
Still not looking at the FBI man Charlotte stood up and began placing their coffee cups on a tray.

"They also do a marvelous Szechuan beef thing."

The fat FBI man signalled the others to leave the room.

"Marin's father taught a seminar in *Moby Dick* once," Charlotte said before she broke.

After the FBI men left that morning Charlotte went upstairs to Marin's room. The Raggedy Ann Warren had sent for Marin's twelfth birthday was on its shelf. The teddy bear Warren had sent for Marin's fourteenth Easter was on its chair. The guitar once used by Joan Baez was on the window seat, where it had been since the night Leonard bought it for Marin at an ACLU auction. The embroidered Swiss organdy curtains were as pristine as they had been the day Marin picked them out. The old valentines beneath the glass on the dressing table were unchanged, the tray of silver bangles and bath oil and eye shadow untouched. All that Marin had removed from the room was every picture, every snapshot, every clipping or class photograph which contained her own image.



ONE IMAGINES A SWEET indolent girl, soft with baby fat, her attention span low and her range of interest limited. Marin approved of infants and puppies. Marin disapproved of "mean-ness" and "showing off." She appeared to approve equally of Leonard and Warren, and tailored her performance to please each of them.

When Warren came to San Francisco she would appear instinctively in the navy-blue blazer no longer required by the progressive Episcopal day school she attended. For Leonard and his friends she would wear blue jeans, and a dashiki which scratched her skin. On principle she "adored madly" the presents Warren occasionally sent, although by her fifteenth birthday these presents still ran to the sporadic stuffed animal in a box bearing the charge-

plate stamp of whatever woman he was living with at the time. In principle she was tolerant of Leonard's efforts on behalf of social justice, although in practice she often found the beneficiaries of these efforts "weird" and their predicaments "unnecessary." That Episcopal day school Marin attended from the age of four until she entered Berkeley had as its aim "the development of a realistic but optimistic attitude," and it was characteristic of Charlotte that whenever the phrase "realistic but optimistic" appeared in a school communiqué she read it as "realistic and optimistic."

That was Charlotte.

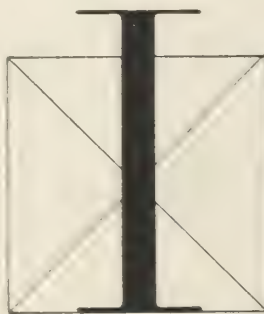
Not Marin.

Marin would never bother changing a phrase to suit herself because she perceived the meanings of words only dimly, and without interest. Perhaps because of her realistic but optimistic attitude Marin was easily confused by such moral questions as were raised by the sight of someone disfigured (would a good God make ugly people?) or the problem of dividing her Halloween candy with the Episcopal orphans (do six licorice balls for the orphans equal one Almond Hershey for Marin, if Marin dislikes licorice?), and when confused could turn sulkv. and withdrawn.

What else do I know about Marin.

I know that her posture toward all adult women was agreeably patronizing.

I know that her posture toward all adult men, toward Leonard and toward Warren and toward any man at all who was not disfigured, was uncomplicatedly seductive. Her mind was empty of grudges and hurts and family malice. Her energies were simple and physical and in the summertime her blond hair had the cast of pale verdigris from the chlorine in swimming pools. Charlotte adored her, brushed her pale hair and licked the tears from her cheeks, held her hand crossing streets and wanted never to let go, believed that when she walked through the valley of the shadow she would be sustained by the taste of Marin's salt tears, her body and blood. The night Charlotte was interrogated and shot in the Estadio Nacional she cried not for God but for Marin.



SEE." LEONARD KEPT SAYING from wherever he was on the day the FBI first came to the house on California Street. "I see."

"I don't see." Charlotte said. "Frankly I don't see at all."

There was a silence. "You're calling from the house."

"What difference does it make."

Charlotte could hear only the faint crackle on the cable. Actually she had forgotten that she was never supposed to call Leonard from the house if she had anything important to tell him. She was supposed to lose any possible surveillance and place the call on what Leonard called a neutral line. During the Mendoza trial in Cleveland she had called Leonard every day from a pay phone. Magnin's and once she had taken a room in a motel on Van Ness just to call London and tell Leonard the





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The passage quoted is taken from "The Autobiography of Theodore Roosevelt"

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she missed him, but now that she had to tell him that Marin was said to have bombed the Transamerica Building she was calling from the white Princess phone in Marin's room.

"I mean what difference could it possibly make if they're listening, since I'm only telling you what they told me in the first place."

Still Leonard said nothing.

"I mean," Charlotte said, "I can't leave the house."

"I want you to leave the house. I want you to stay with Polly Orben in Sausalito. I want you to call Polly Orben right away—"

"I don't want to stay with Polly Orben." Polly Orben had been Leonard's analyst for eight years. Charlotte did not know what Polly Orben and Leonard had been talking about for eight years but Polly Orben frequently reported that they were within a year or so of "terminating," or "ending." She seemed to mean finishing the analysis. "I don't want to leave the house."

"It's Wednesday. Polly counsels at Glide on Wednesday, call her at Glide—"

"I have to be here when Marin calls."

"My point is this." Leonard spoke very carefully. "You don't know where Marin is."

"That's exactly why I have to be here."

"And if you don't know where Marin is, then you can't tell anyone where Marin is. Under oath. Can you?"

Charlotte said nothing.

"If you see my point."

Still Charlotte said nothing.

"Get in touch with Warren. Tell him exactly what I just told you. Tell him he doesn't want to hear from her."

"I guess I'll just wait here and perjure myself," Charlotte said finally. "And then hire you."

Charlotte did not call Polly Orben at Glide. Charlotte did not get in touch with Warren. For the rest of that day Charlotte only lay on Marin's bed, staring at the black-button eyes of the Raggedy Ann Warren had sent for Marin's twelfth birthday. Charlotte did not see how Marin could have played any useful role in flying an L-1011 to Wendover, Utah. Marin could not even drive a car with a manual transmission.

Marin could not fly an L-1011 so Marin must be skiing at Squaw Valley.

Marin had called her great-grandmother's wedding bracelet dead metal.

Marin had been in bed with the flu on her twelfth birthday and as if she were four instead of twelve had slept all night with Warren's Raggedy Ann in her arms.

When it began to rain at six o'clock Charlotte wrapped herself in Marin's blanket but did not close the windows. She went downstairs only once, when two of the FBI men came back to ask if she had a recent photograph of Marin.

"I don't know." In a drawer upstairs she had three recent photographs that Marin had overlooked but there was some quite definite reason why she did not want the FBI men to have them. She could not put her finger on the reason but she knew that there was one. "I'd have to look."

She made no move to look.

She realized suddenly that she was still holding the Raggedy Ann, with its dress pulled up to show the red heart that said I LOVE YOU.

One of the FBI men cleared his throat.

"I don't suppose you've heard from her," he said finally.

"I'm sure you'd tell us if you had," the other said.

"Actually I wouldn't," she said finally.

"Mrs. Douglas—"

"Actually I'd lie. I'd lie to you and I'd perjure myself in court. You know that. You heard me tell my husband that on the telephone."

The two FBI men looked away from each other.

"Or if you didn't hear me *someone* in your office certainly did, you should compare notes down there." She did not want to talk to the FBI this way but she could hear her own voice and it sounded bright and social and it did not stop. "Someone down there's been listening to me on the phone for at least five years, you should know me by now. I'd lie."

"I'm sure you know that under the law a parent has no special—"

The other FBI man held up his hand as if to silence his partner.

"Maybe you'd like someone to stay with you tonight, Mrs. Douglas. Keep an eye on things."

"I have someone keeping an eye on things. I have all those people you moved into the apartment across the street. Haven't I. I mean I didn't see you move them in, but I know how you operate." She could not seem to stop herself. It was the Raggedy Ann. She resented their catching her with the Raggedy Ann. "One thing I *don't* know. I don't know if you kept tapes of all those telephone calls."

Neither man spoke.

"I mean it could be very useful if you did. If you could sit down now and listen to those telephone calls you'd probably know more about Marin and me and Leonard and Warren then I even remember. You could probably figure the whole thing out."

One of the men closed his briefcase. The other reached for his raincoat.

"You must have six or seven hundred hours on Marin and Lisa Harper alone. Doing their algebra." Charlotte smoothed the Raggedy Ann's dress over its red heart and did not look at the FBI men. "Lisa's at Stanford this year. In case you missed the installment when Lisa got into Stanford and Marin didn't."

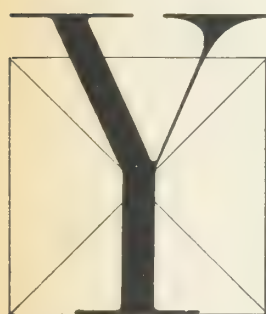
"We're not on opposing sides, Mrs. Douglas."

"Marin cried when the letter came from Stanford. You probably remember that. Marin crying."

The next morning when Charlotte woke in Marin's bed the rain was streaming down Marin's organdy curtains and puddling on the parquet floor. Charlotte knew as she woke why she could not give the FBI a recent photograph of Marin. She could not give the FBI a recent photograph of Marin because any photograph useful to them would show Marin's eyes, and then Marin's eyes would stare back at her from newspapers and television screens, and she was not yet ready to deliver her child to history.



Leonard flew home immediately but because of an airport strike at Beirut and a demonstration at Orly it took him thirty-six hours to arrive in San Francisco, and by then they had sifted the debris and identified Marin's gold bracelet attached like a charm to the firing pin of the bomb. They had also received the tape, and released Marin's name to the press. Charlotte learned about the tape when she opened the door of the house on California Street and found a television crew already filming. On the six o'clock news there was film that showed Charlotte opening the door, turning from the camera and running upstairs as a young Negro pursued her with a microphone. When this film was repeated at eleven it was followed for the first time by the picture of Marin, the famous picture of Marin Bogart, the two-year-old newspaper picture of Marin in her pink-and-white candy-striped Children's Hospital volunteer's pinafore. The newspaper had apparently lost the negative and simply cropped and enlarged a newsprint reproduction in which Marin was almost indistinguishable, clearly a complaisant young girl in a pinafore but enigmatically expressionless, her eyes only smudges on the gravure screen. In the weeks that followed the appearance of the picture those two photogravure smudges would eradicate every other image Charlotte had of Marin's eyes. The day I finally saw Marin I was surprised by her eyes. She has Charlotte's eyes. She has nothing else of Charlotte's but she has Charlotte's eyes.



YOU NO DOUBT HEARD THE TAPE.

*"This is not an isolated action. We ask no one's permission to make the revolution."*

I heard only part of it, on a Radio Jamaica relay, but I read excerpts from it in *Time* and in *Prensa Latina* and in the *Caracas Daily Journal*, excerpts always illustrated by the im-

penetrable picture of the child in the candy-striped pinafore. The night Charlotte first heard the tape she tried to transcribe it word for word, so that she could explain to Leonard and Warren what Marin had in mind. She got only as far as the part where Marin discussed what she called the revolutionary character of her organization. *"Now I would like to discuss the revolutionary character of our organization,"* Marin definitely said on the tape. *"The fact that our organization is revolutionary in character is due above all to the fact that all our activity is defined as revolutionary."*

Charlotte read this sentence several times. She wondered if she had misheard Marin, or missed an important clause. The tape was still running and Marin could still be heard, talking about "expropriation" and "firepower" and "revolutionary justice" and about how the Trans-america Building was one of many symbols of imperialist *latifundismo* in San Francisco, but Charlotte was still fixed on that one sentence. *The fact that our organization is revolutionary in character is due above all to the fact that all our activity is defined as revolutionary.* She could parse the sentence but she could make no sense of it,

could find no way to rephrase it so that Leonard and Warren would understand.

As it turned out she did not need to explain the sentence to Leonard because when he arrived from the airport at midnight he said that the sentence was not original with Marin but had been lifted from a handbook by a Brazilian guerrilla theorist named Marighela.

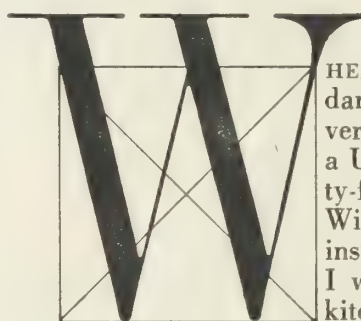
"I've got just one thing to say about the operation," Leonard said.

Charlotte waited.

"I know where they got their rhetoric but I'd like to know where they got their hardware."

As it turned out Charlotte did not need to explain the sentence to Warren either because when he called from New York at two that morning he had already heard the tape and, like Leonard, he had just one thing to say about the operation.

"Fuck Marin," he said.



WHEN I MARRIED Edgar Strasser-Mendana I received, from an aunt in Denver who had been taken as a bride to a United Fruit station in Cuba, twenty-four Haviland dessert plates in the Windsor Rose pattern and a letter of instructions for living in the tropics. I was to allow no night soil on my kitchen garden, boil water for douches as well as for drinking, preserve my husband's books with a thin creosote solution, schedule regular hours for sketching or writing and regard the playing of bridge as an avoidance of reality to be indulged only at bi-weekly intervals and never with depressive acquaintances. In this regime I could perhaps escape what the letter called the fever and disquiet of the latitudes. That I had been living in these same latitudes unmarried for some years made no difference to my aunt: she appeared to locate the marriage bed as the true tropic of fever and disquiet.

So in many ways did Charlotte.

I think I have never known anyone who regarded the sexual connection as quite so unamusing a contract. So dark and febrile and outside the range of the normal did all aspects of this contract seem to Charlotte that she was for example incapable of walking normally across a room in the presence of two men with whom she had slept. Her legs seemed to lock unnaturally into her pelvic bones. Her body went stiff, as if convulsed by the question of who had access to it and who did not. I recall once telling Charlotte about a village on the Orinoco where female children were ritually cut on the inner thigh by their first sexual partners, the point being to scar the female with the male's totem. Charlotte saw nothing extraordinary in this. "I mean that's pretty much what happens everywhere, isn't it," she said. "Somebody cuts you? Where it doesn't show?"

I keep those cuts that don't show in mind when I think about Charlotte Douglas's passage from the house on California Street to the Boca Grande airport. Charlotte Amelia Douglas. Charlotte Amelia Bogart. Born



Charlotte Amelia Havemeyer. Charlotte. I am not even certain she was talking figuratively.

In the first week after the release of Marin's tape these events occurred.

Charlotte received a call from a young woman in New York who said that Warren would arrive in San Francisco on a midnight plane. Warren did not.

Charlotte received a call from a spiritualist in the Netherlands who said that he perceived the aura of a girl in a pinafore selling tripe in the Belleville section of Paris. He would discuss his vision in detail upon receipt of a first-class airplane ticket to San Francisco, round trip and refundable.

The young woman in New York called back to say that Warren had missed the midnight plane but would arrive in San Francisco the next afternoon. Warren did not.

A pair of FBI men came for coffee every morning.

An apartment-court manager on the outskirts of Detroit told NBC that he had seen Marin and "two jumped-up coloreds" loading carbines into the trunk of a 1957 Pontiac at dawn in the Livonia Mall parking lot. By the time he appeared on CBS he described Marin's companions as "possibly black or Indian" and the car as a 1957 Pontiac "or some later-model General Motors vehicle." In the *Detroit Free Press* the story was headed "A SEARCH FOR A NERVOUS INDIAN."

Marin was said to be in Havana.

Marin was said to be in Hanoi.

Warren left two messages on the answering service that he would definitely arrive in San Francisco via TWA the following morning at 10:35 A.M. He did not.

**W**HAT HAVE WE HERE," Leonard said when he finally walked into the room Charlotte had taken in the Fairmont Hotel. Leonard had addressed a bar luncheon on constitutional law at the Fairmont and a telephone had been brought to the dais and it was Warren calling from New York. Charlotte had watched Leonard take the call from Warren and then she had left the dais and gone to the desk and asked for a room and telephoned Leonard to meet her upstairs when he finished lunch. The room was cold and the radiator jammed off and the big windows overlooking the Pacific Union Club would not close. Yet for an hour and ten minutes Charlotte had been sitting refoot in the gray afternoon light wearing only the handmade navy-blue silk underwear she had just bought at a shop in the lobby. She had been trying not to remember about Marin or Warren. She had been trying to remember a carnal mood.

"No. Don't tell me," Leonard said. "Let me guess. You decided the way to avoid seeing Warren was to move to the Fairmont."

"I don't want to talk about Warren," Charlotte said.

"I got him a ride out."

"Don't talk about him," Charlotte said. "Come here."

"I know perfectly well what you're doing. Even if you don't."

"Don't talk about it. Don't laugh. I just want it."

"You don't want it at all."

Charlotte sat on the edge of the bed and pulled the spread around herself. "I did."

"You're transparent, Charlotte. To everyone but yourself."

Charlotte gazed out the window. "Somebody died," she said after a while. "Somebody died at the Pacific Union Club. While you were talking. Downstairs."

"How do you know?"

"The fire department came. The resuscitator squad. And then an ambulance. And they lowered the flag."

Leonard sat on a chair facing the bed. "I know exactly what you're trying to do."

"Look. You can see the flag. Half mast. What do you mean, you got him a ride out?"

"Never mind Warren. It's a lousy idea, Charlotte, trying to have a baby."

"Who said anything about a baby. I say I want to fuck, you say I don't. You say you got Warren a ride out, I say how, you say never mind Warren. I say somebody died at the Pacific Union Club, you start talking about having a baby. I don't know what you're talking about."

Leonard kept his eyes on Charlotte but she did not meet them.

"Quite honestly I don't."

"Quite honestly I don't think you do. Quite honestly I always know what you're thinking before you do. What you're thinking now is this: you get yourself pregnant, Warren can't get to you. ABC. QED. Don't ask me why. Where did you get that underwear?"

Charlotte said nothing.

"Has it ever occurred to you that your primary erogenous zone is your underwear?"

Charlotte had pulled the bedspread closer and smoked a cigarette without speaking and there had not seemed any point in staying in the cold room after that. In the elevator it occurred to her that he had been trying to make her laugh with him but that was another mood she could not remember. In fact she did want a baby.

"He apparently called the office and gave Suzy a lot of shit before he got me here." Leonard nodded at the Fairmont doorman. "'Your friend Warren,' Suzy calls him."

"I don't want him to come out here."

"It's not up to you, Charlotte. Come out of your trance. He wants to come out."

"Then why hasn't he?"

"You know as well as I do *why hasn't he*, Charlotte, he hasn't been able to promote an airplane ticket, that's *why hasn't he*."

"He didn't say that."

"Of course he didn't say that. Wake up."

Charlotte concentrated on trying to tie her scarf in the wind.

"So as soon as the Q-A was over I made a call and got him a ride out on Bashti Levant's plane."



"I can't—" Charlotte broke off.

"You can't what."

Charlotte shrugged.

"You can't what, Charlotte."

"I can't see Warren on a small plane with Bashti Levant for five hours." She had just seized on this but it was true. Bashti Levant was in the music business. Bashti Levant had "labels," and three-piece suits and large yellow teeth and obscure Balkan proclivities. "They won't like each other."

"No. They won't. They will cordially dislike each other and they will entirely entertain each other. That's not what you were going to say. You can't what."

"I can't deal with Warren right now."

"What's to 'deal with'? You were married to him, now you're married to me. You think you're the only two people in the world who used to fuck and don't any more?"

"Not at all." Another thing Charlotte could not deal with was Leonard's essentially rational view of the sexual connection. "There's also you and me."

"Not bad. You're waking up." Leonard seemed pleased. "Here's a taxi."

"I think I'll walk."

"Then walk," Leonard said as he got into the taxi.

Charlotte walked as far as Grace Cathedral and stood for a while just inside the nave in a particular pool of yellow light Marin had liked as a child. When the light shifted on the window and there was no more yellow Charlotte left the cathedral. She intended walking back to the Fairmont to get a taxi but there was one idling outside the cathedral, and Leonard was waiting in it, just as he had been waiting in a taxi outside the courthouse the morning she divorced Warren.

"She had a straw hat one Easter." Charlotte had taken Leonard's hand in the taxi but neither of them spoke until the house on California Street was in sight. "And a flowered lawn dress."

"Don't think you have to get yourself pregnant just to prove he doesn't have you anymore, Charlotte."

"We took her to lunch at the Carlyle, I remember she was cold."

"Don't make the mistake of thinking you can just run it back through the projector, Charlotte."

"Warren gave her his coat."

Leonard said nothing.

"And we drank a lot of Ramos fizzes. And in the middle of lunch Warren said he had an appointment downtown. And when the check came I didn't have any money. I didn't even have two dollars for a taxi. Marin and I walked home." She turned to Leonard. "She was three. Everybody admired her hat. I think I was never so happy on a Sunday. Why are you bringing him out."

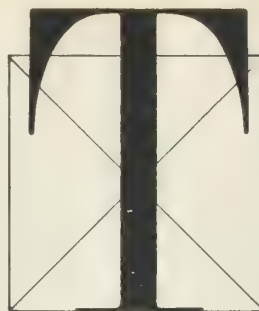
"He's her father, isn't he."

"I can't handle it."

Leonard sat on the edge of the bed and picked up the handmade pieces of navy-blue silk from the floor. They were very plain. They had no lace or embroidery. They had only the rows of infinitesimal stitches. "Maybe I want to see if you can. Somebody in the Azores went blind making these."

"Why do you have to bring him out."

"Because he gave her his coat," Leonard said.



TWO WERE FOUR TRULY wonderful specimens you condemned me to flout here with," Warren said when he walked into the house on California Street at nine-thirty the next morning.

Charlotte stood perfectly still. Warren looked as if he had not slept several days. His eyes were bloodshot, his chin stubbled. He was wearing

sneakers and a muffler Charlotte recognized as one she had knit for herself the winter they lived in an unheated apartment on East Ninety-third Street, and he was carrying not a suitcase but two shopping bags stuffed with what appeared to be dirty laundry. He was also carrying one red rose, which he handed to Charlotte without looking at her.

"Four authentic gargoyles," he said. "Some favor you did me. The four worst people in the world. Climber. Vermin. Gargoyles. New York trash. Hogarth caricature. Twenty-five thousand feet, no exit. Deliver me from favors. I need a drink."

"You repeated gargoyles," Leonard said. "Otherwise vintage."

"The FBI is due at ten," Charlotte said.

"What's that got to do with your getting me a drink. Me no get FBI joke."

"I haven't heard that since it was still 'me no get India joke,'" Leonard said. "Which I remember vividly from the night I introduced you to the maharanee of wherever she was from."

"Lower Pelham," Warren said. "She was the maharanee of Lower Pelham." He dropped the shopping bags on the floor in front of the fireplace. An aerosol can of shaving cream and a balled seersucker suit stuffed with dirty socks rolled out. "Get somebody to wash and iron that, Charlotte, all right? The suit just needs pressing."

"We don't have any washers and ironers on the place today." Charlotte retrieved the aerosol can before it hit the open fire. "Or any pressers."

"I can see you're in one of your interesting moods. Tell me what else you can't do for me today, Charlotte. You think you can give me a drink? Or can't you."

Charlotte filled a glass with ice and splashed bourbon into it. Her hands were shaking. The veins on her arms were standing out and she did not want Warren to see them. When she finally spoke her voice was neutral. "Who exactly was on this plane."

"All friends of yours, I have no doubt. Which reminds me, you look like hell, your veins show." Warren took the glass. "This Levant creature, whoever he is."

"Bashti Levant controls three out of five pop records sold in America." Leonard seemed amused. "As you know perfectly well."

"Yeah, well, I had some fun at his expense, I don't mind telling you. I had a little fun with him and this castrato he had along to bray at his jokes. This past Palm Beach castrato. Fawning capon. French cuffs. Parasitical eunuch."

"You didn't like him," Leonard said.

"Palm Beach trash hanger-on. I let the women alone."

"The last Southern gentleman," Leonard said.

"Not that they deserved it. Two terrible women. The



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Paul and Hope Forsman on the Forsmans' second visit to Bermuda



"I guess for a man and wife to come to Bermuda to play golf is about as relaxing as anything could be."

"The caves are beautiful and the spectacular view of the water makes you want to dive right in there.

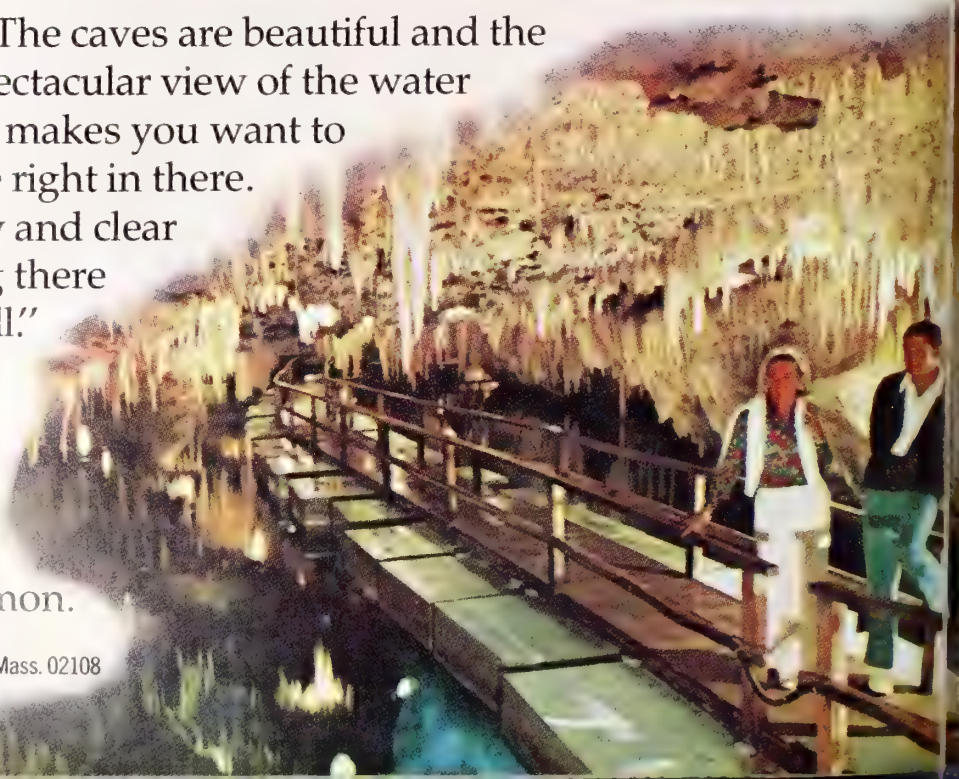
It's pretty and clear and blue and lying there absolutely still."

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ible voices, terrible brays. The castrato only brayed when the Levant creature snapped his fingers, but the women brayed all the time, 3,000 miles of braying. *Le sland. Le weekend. Les monkey-gland injections. Le New York trash.* I believe one of them was married to the Levant creature. Whoever he is, I have no idea."

"That surprises me. Since Leonard just told you."

"That surprises you, does it." Warren rattled the ice in his glass. "You surprise easier than you used to. I suppose this creature is a client of Leonard's."

"As a matter of fact he is."

"Leonard's got all the luck. Arabs. Jews. Indians. Bashti Levant."

"Niggers," Leonard said. "You forgot niggers."

"How exactly did this creature come to your attention, Leonard? He rape an Arab? Or is that possible. Actually believe that's a solecism. Raping an Arab."

"You've had that Arab in the wings, I can tell by your delivery." Leonard took Warren's glass and filled it. "I got involved with Bashti on a dope charge a few years ago. Involving certain of his artists."

"I don't believe what I'm hearing. Bashti's artists."

"There was a civil-liberties issue."

"Of course there was." Warren choked with laughter and slapped his knee. "I knew there was."

"There was," Charlotte said.

In the silence that followed she could hear her voice, ho, harsh and ugly. She fixed her eyes on the ring Leonard had brought her from wherever he had gone to meet the man who financed the Tupamaros. The square emerald ring. The big square emerald from some capital she could not remember.

"Listen to that voice," Warren said. "Let's have that one of voice again."

Leonard looked at Charlotte and shook his head slightly.

Charlotte picked up a cigarette and lit it.

"No wonder your daughter left home," Warren said.

The red rose Warren had given Charlotte fell from the table to the floor.

Charlotte said nothing.

"All I hold against your daughter is she didn't catch Bashti Levant with that pipe bomb. Bashti and certain of his artists. That's the only bone I want to pick with your daughter. Your daughter and mine."

"He doesn't mellow," Leonard said finally.

"What did you expect, Leonard? You expect I'd hit forty-five and start applauding the family of man?"

Warren drained his second drink. "It's my birthday, Charlotte. You haven't wished me happy birthday."

"I'll tell you something I expected, I expected—" Charlotte broke off. She did not know what she had expected. She concentrated on the emerald.

Bogotá.

Quito.

She had no idea where Leonard had met the man who financed the Tupamaros.

"Today's not your birthday," she said finally. "Your birthday was last month."

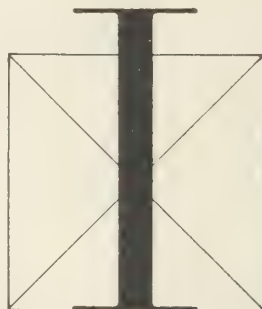
"Your husband expected a humanist."

Leonard," Leonard said.

Pardon?"

Her husband's name is Leonard."

"I stole that rose for you," Warren said. "Off the flight of the living dead."



KNOW WHY CHARLOTTE liked talking to the FBI: the agents would let her talk about Marin. Their devotion to Marin seemed total. They were pilgrims pledged to the collection of relics from Marin's passion. During the days before Warren arrived in San Francisco the agents had taken Charlotte to see Marin's apartment on

Haste Street in Berkeley. The agents had taken Charlotte to see the house on Grove Street in Berkeley where they had found the cache of .30-caliber Browning automatic rifles and the translucent pink orthodontal retainer Marin was supposed to wear to correct her bite. In both those places the gray morning light fell through dusty windows onto worn hardwood floors and Charlotte had remembered how sad she herself had been at Berkeley before Warren came to her door.

"Let's flop back to one of the theories you were espousing yesterday, Mrs. Douglas. When you—"

"Let's flop back to all of them," Warren said. Warren had been sitting in the same chair ever since he walked into the house and dropped his shopping bags. He had gotten up only to get himself drinks and once, perfunctorily, when the FBI men arrived and Leonard left. "I'm the felon's father," he had said to the FBI men. He seemed bent now in a fit of laughter. "I want to flop back to every one of these theories Mrs. Douglas has been espousing. In my absence. I've been out of touch, I didn't know Mrs. Douglas had theories. To espouse."

"When I what," Charlotte said.

"Flip flop. We need ice, Charlotte."

"When you—" The FBI man glanced uneasily at Warren. "When you said yesterday that Marin 'might have been sad' what exactly did you mean? Normal everyday blues? Or something more, uh, out of the mainstream?"

"Just your normal everyday mainstream power-to-the-people *latifundismo* Berkeley blues." Warren was still bent with laughter. "Just those old Amerikan blues. Spell that with a K."

"I don't know what I meant," Charlotte said.

"Some theory," Warren said. "Did you get the K? Did you spell it with a K?"

"To push on for a moment, Mrs. Douglas, the office raised one other question. Did your daughter ever mention a Russian, name of, uh, let's see."

The FBI man examined his notebook.

"Those old Amerikan blues didn't come up the river from New Orleans, they K-O-M-E up the river from New Orleans. Get it? Charlotte? Did he get the K?"

"He got it."

"Gurdjieff," the FBI man said. "Russian, name of Gurdjieff. Marin ever mention him?"

"In the first place he was an Armenian," Warren said. "Otherwise you're on top of the case."

"I'm not sure I get your meaning, Mr. Bogart."



"Not at all. You're doing fine."

"Excuse me. The Gurdjieff I'm thinking of is a Russian."

"Excuse me. The Gurdjieff you're thinking of is Bashti Levant."

"Warren. Please."

"Don't you think that's funny, Charlotte? 'Excuse me, the Gurdjieff you're thinking of is Bashti Levant?'"

"It's funny, Warren. Now—"

"You used to think I was funny."

"Let me try to put this on track." The FBI man cleared his throat. "Marin ever mention a Gurdjieff of any nationality? Ever mention reading about him?"

"No," Charlotte said.

"Marin can't read," Warren said. "She plays a good game of tennis, she's got a nice backhand, good strong hair and an IQ of about 103."

Charlotte closed her eyes.

"Charlotte. Face facts. Credit where credit is due, you raised her. She's boring."

"I'm not sure this is a productive tack," the FBI man said.

"Irving's not sure this is a productive tack." Warren rattled his ice. "Hear, hear, Charlotte. Listen to Irving."

"Bruno," the FBI man said. "The name is Bruno Furetta."

"Don't mind me, Irving, I've been drinking."

"I happen to know you're not all that drunk, Warren." Charlotte did not open her eyes. "I happen to know you're just amusing yourself. As usual."

"You get the picture."

Charlotte stood up. "And I want to tell you *I am not*—"

"She's overwhelmed," Charlotte heard Warren say as she fled the room. "Let me give you some advice, Irving. Never mind the Armenians, *cherchez le tennis pro*."

**B**OO HOO," WARREN SAID when he came upstairs an hour later. "What happened to your sense of humor?"

Charlotte said nothing. She did not want Warren in the room. She did not want Warren to be in any room where she slept with Leonard, did not want him to see Leonard's Sec-  
onal and her hand cream together on the table by the bed, did not want to see him examining the neckties that Leonard had that morning tried, rejected, and left on the bed. In fact she did not want him to see the bed at all.

"We don't have anything in common anymore." Warren picked up a yellow silk tie and knotted it around his collar. "You and me. Leonard won't miss this, he's jaundiced enough. You ever noticed? He's got bad color?"

"One thing we have in common is that we both agree that as far as having anything in common goes—" Charlotte broke off. She was watching a tube of KY jelly on the table by the bed. She did not see any way to move it into the drawer without attracting Warren's attention. "As far as having anything in common goes we

don't have anything. In common."

"You sound like you had a stroke. You had a stroke?"

"I happen to have a headache."

"You mean I happen to give you a headache."

"I mean I want you to leave this room."

"Don't worry, I'll leave this room." Warren sat on the bed, picked up the tube of KY jelly and put it in the drawer. "I don't like this room."

Charlotte said nothing.

"I only flew out here to see how you were."

Still Charlotte said nothing.

"I don't like your room, I don't like your house, I don't like your life." Warren picked up a silver box from the table by the bed. The box held marijuana and played "Puff, the Magic Dragon" when the lid was lifted. Warren lifted the lid and looked at Charlotte. "I bet the two of you talk about 'turning on.' See what I mean about your life?"

"Go away," Charlotte whispered.

"Excuse me. I mean your 'life-style.' You don't have a life, you have a 'life-style.' You still look good, though."

"Go away."

Warren looked at her for a while before he spoke.

"I want you to come to New Orleans with me."

Charlotte tried to concentrate on meeting Leonard for lunch. Very soon she would walk out of this room and down the stairs. She would walk out of this house and she would take a taxi to the Tadich Grill, alone.

"I said I want you to come to New Orleans with me, are you deaf? Or just rude."

She would go in the taxi alone to meet Leonard at the Tadich Grill.

"I want you to see Porter with me. Porter is dying. Porter wants to see you. Do this one thing for me."

Charlotte tried to keep her mind on whether to order sand dabs or oysters at the Tadich Grill. Porter was a distant cousin of Warren's. During the five years Charlotte and Warren were married Porter had invested \$25,000 in an off-Broadway play that Warren never wrote, \$30,000 in a political monthly that Warren never took beyond its dummy issue, and \$2,653.84 in ransoming Warren's and her furniture and Marin's baby clothes from the Seven Santini Brothers Storage Company in Long Island City. Charlotte did not even like Porter.

"If you won't do it for me you'll do it for Porter. Or you're a worse human being than even I think."

"I can't just leave. Can I."

"You're not leaving, you're paying a visit to Porter Who is dying. Who loves you."

"I can't forgive Porter what he said to Leonard. A dinner out here. Two years ago. He behaved badly." In fact Charlotte could not even recall what Porter had said to Leonard, but whenever she talked to Warren she fell helplessly into both his diction and his rosary of other people's disloyalties. "I just can't forgive Porter that at all."

"Porter loves you."

"Leonard had to ask him to leave the house."

"What's that got to do with you."

There did not seem to Charlotte any ground on which this question could safely be met. She put it from her mind.

"I said what's that got to do with you."



Charlotte stood up, walked to the dressing room, and took a coat from the closet.

"Porter's dying, Charlotte."

Charlotte put her coat over her shoulders.

"Porter's dying and you're putting on your mink coat. You got Hadassah today? Mah-jongg? You get the picture about your life?"

"It's not mink. It's sable. I have a lunch date."

"Say that again."

"I said: *I have a lunch date.* With Leonard."

"Don't let me keep you. Somebody who loves you is dying, your only child is lost, I'm asking you one last favor, and you've got a lunch date." Warren opened the lid of the silver box again. The mechanism began to play. "You getting it? You getting the picture? You're never going to see Marin again but never mind, you've got a lunch date? And maybe after your 'lunch date' you and your interesting husband can, what do you call it, 'get oned'?"

"You *fuck*," Charlotte screamed.

Warren smiled.

Charlotte grabbed up a pair of scissors and clutched them, point out.

Charlotte's sable coat fell to the floor.

"You walk into the house four hours ago, you haven't said Marin's *name* except to make fun of her. You try to use Marin on me, you don't give a *fuck* about—"

Warren still smiled.

The music box still played "Puff, the Magic Dragon."

Charlotte looked at her hand and opened it and the scissors fell to the floor. "About Marin," she said.

"Time and fevers," Warren said finally. His voice was tired. "Burn away."

"I don't know what you're saying."

"I'm not saying, babe. I'm quoting. 'And the grave loves the child ephemeral.' Who am I quoting?"

"Shakespeare. Milton. I don't know who you're quoting. Make that thing stop playing."

"Auden. W. H. Auden. You aren't any better read than I ever were, I'll give you that." Warren closed the box and picked up Charlotte's coat from the floor. "'But in arms till break of day let the living creature lie.' Where's your lunch?"

"I can't go to lunch." She stood like a child and let Warren put the coat on her shoulders. "I can't go to lunch crying."

"Where was your lunch?"

"Tadich's."

"Sure," Warren said. "Let's eat some fish."

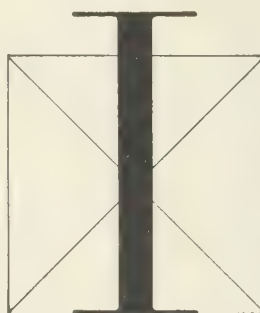
Warren entertained Leonard at lunch with news of an automotive heir they both knew who was devoting his fortune to Micronesian independence; excused himself five times to make telephone calls; cancelled the oysters Leonard had ordered for Charlotte because Pacific oysters would not compare with Gulf oysters; ordered oysters for himself, drank three gin Martinis and a German beer, ate with Charlotte with his own fork because she was too thin to eat, left the restaurant before Leonard ordered coffee and did not reappear that afternoon or evening. The morning Charlotte told Leonard that she could not live in the same house with Warren. Leonard moved

Warren to a motel in the Marina, and paid for the room a week in advance. Charlotte stayed upstairs until they were gone. I understand what Warren Bogart could do to Charlotte Douglas because I met him, later, once in New Orleans: he had the look of a man who could drive a woman like Charlotte right off her head.

I have no idea what I mean by "a woman like Charlotte."

I suppose I mean only a woman so convinced of the danger that lies in the backward glance.

I might have said a woman so unstable, but I told you, Charlotte performed the tracheotomy, Charlotte dropped the clinic apron at the colonel's feet. I am less and less convinced that the word *unstable* has any useful meaning except insofar as it describes a chemical compound.



IN THE SECOND WEEK after the release of Marin's tape Leonard flew to Montreal to meet with leaders of a Greek liberation movement. A man who described himself as a disillusioned Scientologist called Charlotte to say that Marin was under the influence of a Clear in Shasta Lake. A masseuse at Elizabeth Arden called Charlotte to say that she had received definite word from Edgar Cayce via Mass Mind that Marin was with the Hunzas in the Himalayas.

Charlotte watched the rain blowing across California Street.

Leonard flew from Montreal to Chicago to speak at a Days of Rage memorial.

"You want to see bad teeth, get on down here," Warren said to Charlotte the first night he telephoned. He was calling not from the motel in the Marina but from the Polo Lounge of the Beverly Hills Hotel, where he had flown with Bashti Levant and one of his English bands. "The algae on the genetic pool. They drink Mai Tais. Get it?"

"I don't understand what you're doing there."

"I'm not screwing their women, if that's what you think. Not even with yours, Basil. 'Basil.' 'Ian.' 'Andrew.' English Jews. You over your homicidal mood?"

Charlotte said nothing.

"The women all had lobotomies at fourteen, but the teeth stop me. Will you see Porter on his deathbed or won't you?"

"What exactly is Porter dying of?"

"Porter is dying of that long disease, his life. Alexander Pope, lost on you. Never mind what Porter's dying of. Do it for me."

"I don't even believe Porter's dying. If Porter were dying I wouldn't think you'd be hanging around the Beverly Hills Hotel. With people you say you can't stand."

"I'm not 'hanging around,' Charlotte, I'm 'hanging out.' The phrase is 'hanging out.' You always did have a tin ear. Will you come to New Orleans or won't you?"

"I won't."

"Why won't you?"

"Because if I went to New Orleans with you," Char-



lotte said, "I would end up murdering you. I would take a knife and murder you. In your sleep."

"I don't sleep anyway."

Charlotte said nothing.

"It doesn't matter to me what you do. Go, don't go. Come, don't come. Murder me, don't murder me. I'm only telling you what you have to do for your own peace of mind."

"I have had that shit," Charlotte whispered, and hung up.

"I would bet my life on your having some character," Warren said the second night he telephoned from the Beverly Hills Hotel. "Lucky for me I didn't."

Charlotte said nothing.

"Not that it matters. Not that it's worth anything. My life."

Charlotte said nothing.

"You're going to remember this, Charlotte. I tried to tell you what to do. You're going to lie awake and remember this for the rest of your miserable unfortunate life."

Charlotte said nothing.

Charlotte believed that there was something familiar about this telephone call but for a moment she could not put her finger on what it was. There had been something else she was supposed to lie awake and remember for the rest of her miserable unfortunate life.

Leaving him.

That was it.

She tried to put that other telephone call back out of her mind. It must have been after she left him, the other telephone call, because she had never exactly told him that she was leaving him. She had told him that she was going to her mother's funeral. This was true but not the whole truth. Her mother had just died and she was going to have some money to take care of herself and Marin and she did not want to give the money to Warren and she took Marin and flew out of Idlewild and never went back.

"You hear me, Charlotte?"

She had cried all the way to San Francisco and Marin had been asleep on her lap and she remembered the landing and Marin's pale hair damp and sticky with sleep and tears.

"Charlotte? They ever mention sins of omission in those wonderful Okie schools you went to?"

For the rest of that week when the telephone rang between one and four A.M. Charlotte would hang up as soon as she heard Warren's voice. A few days later a copy of *Time* arrived with a photograph that showed Charlotte leaving the house on California Street with her hands over her face, and Charlotte wrote a letter to the editor pointing out that the description of her as a "reclusive socialite" was a contradiction in terms. Leonard returned from Chicago and asked Charlotte not to mail the letter.

"I just remembered I never told Warren I was leaving him," Charlotte said to Leonard.

"He's had fifteen years, I guess he's figured it out," Leonard said to Charlotte.

"I mean I just kissed him goodbye at Idlewild and

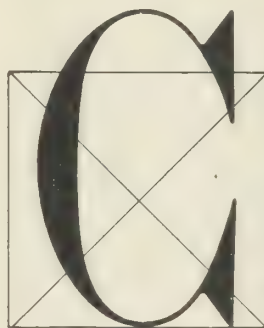
said I'd be back in a week and I knew I wouldn't be."

"I know it."

"How could you know it?"

"Because that's how you'll leave me."

"Fourteen years," Charlotte said. "Not fifteen. Fourteen."



CHARLOTTE DID NOT GET OUT of bed the day after she went with Pete Wright to open the safe-deposit box.

"I'm not sure your daughter appreciates the legal bind she's put you in, Char."

Pete Wright was examining some stock certificates. Charlotte had known Pete Wright longer than she had known Leonard. He had roomed at Stanford with Dickie and he had handled her divorce from Warren and as Leonard's junior partner he had paid a Christmas call every year with a suitable present for Marin, but there in the safe-deposit vault of the Wells Fargo Bank on Powell Street he had kept referring to Marin as "your daughter." Charlotte did not want to hear about the legal bind she was in and she did not want Pete Wright to call her Char. Only Dickie called her Char. There was something else about Pete Wright that bothered her but she did not want to think about that either.

"You're in a bit of a pickle here, Char."

"That's exactly what you said when I left Warren. And you took this enormous legal problem to Leonard and Leonard said I wasn't."

Charlotte took a gold pin of her grandmother's from the safe-deposit box.

Charlotte imagined the gold pin attached to the firing pin of a bomb.

Pete Wright had come to New York once when she was married to Warren.

"And I wasn't."

"You weren't what?"

"I wasn't in a bit of a pickle."

"I have nothing but respect for Leonard as a lawyer. Charlotte, but, as you know, Leonard leaves the estate work to me." Pete Wright took a deep breath. "Now what we have here are stock certificates worth X dollars a quarter in dividends—"

"Eight hundred and seven, \$807 a quarter. I looked it up when you called me."

"What I'm saying, Charlotte, is that these particular certificates are in your and your daughter's names as joint tenants. Her signature—"

"I can forge it, can't I?"

"Not legally, no."

"All right. I won't cash the checks. It's \$807 a quarter it's nothing."

The gold pin had a broken clasp. As Charlotte held the pin in her fingers she had an abrupt physical sense of eating chicken à la king and overdone biscuits at her grandmother's house in Hollister.

Pete Wright.

Pete Wright had been in New York once and had



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aken her to the Palm for dinner.

"What may seem 'nothing' to you, Charlotte—"

"I suppose you're about to tell me that \$807 a quarter is the average annual income for a grape picker. Is that what you're about to tell me?"

"I'm about to overlook your hostility."

"Leonard leaves the estate work to you, you leave the grape pickers to Leonard, is that fair?"

"We used to be friends, Charlotte, and I like to think—"

She could taste the soft bits of pimento in the chicken à la king.

She could smell the biscuits burning in the oven.

She could also smell citronella, and calamine lotion, and the sweetened milky emulsion in prescription bottles that contained aureomycin. She could taste the acrid goat cheese her father used to get from the man who ran his cattle on the ranch. Her father had died. She could feel rushed and browning in her hand the camellias her mother used to braid into her hair for birthday parties. Her mother had died. She had erased burned biscuits and citronella when Warren came to her door in Berkeley, and she seemed to have been busy since, but there in the safe-deposit vault of the Wells Fargo Bank on Powell Street she was not so busy.

She had erased some other things too.

She had been too busy.

She had gotten drunk at the Palm with Pete Wright.

"I gather by your silence you think Warren might oppose it."

"Oppose what?" Charlotte said.

"Oppose declaring your daughter legally dead."

Charlotte looked at Pete Wright.

"It's a legality. It doesn't mean anything, but it would enable you to cash these particular dividend checks."

Charlotte picked up the certificates.

"As well as clarify the question of the ranch. Which I feel impelled to remind you is tied up in trust for her. A life trust, granted, but—"

Charlotte tore the certificates in half.

Pete Wright gazed at the wall behind Charlotte and made a sucking noise with his teeth. "Warren's quite disturbed. I don't know if you realize that. He comes by the house, he drinks too much, he jumps all over Clarice out her hatha yoga class, he acts like—"

Her mother had died.

Warren had not come home the night she got drunk at the Palm with Pete Wright.

"You don't need to tell me what Warren acts like."

"I gather you and Warren have had some misunderstanding, the rights and wrongs of which are outside my review, but—"

Her father had died.

Warren had called at four A.M. the night she got drunk at the Palm with Pete Wright and she had told him not to come home.

"—I must say I don't think you're solving anything by pretending there aren't certain complications to—"

People did die. People were loose in the world and left and she had been too busy to notice.

The morning after she got drunk at the Palm she and Warren had taken Marin to lunch at the Carlyle. Marin was cold.

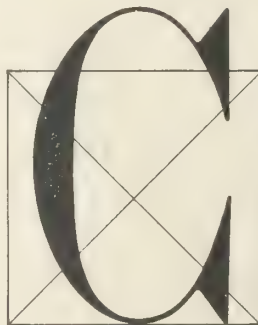
"I'm trying to talk to you like a Dutch uncle," Pete

Wright said.

Warren gave her his coat.

"I think I fucked you one Easter," Charlotte said.

For the next several days Charlotte wanted only to eat the food she had eaten in Hollister but she had lost the recipes her mother had written out and Charlotte did not know the number of any couple who would come to the house on California Street and do chicken à la king and burned biscuits. When I think of Charlotte Douglas apprehending death at the age of thirty-nine in the safe-deposit vault of a bank in San Francisco it occurs to me that there was some advantage in having a mother who died when I was eight, a father who died when I was ten, before I was busy.



CHARLOTTE DID NOT GET OUT of bed the day after she met the woman named Enid Schrader.

"Mark spoke so very highly of you," the woman had said on the telephone. There had been in Enid Schrader's voice something Charlotte did not want to recognize: a forced gaiety, a haggard sprightliness, a separateness not unlike her own. "Of you and your beautiful home."

Mark Schrader was said to have been on the L-1011 with Marin. Mark Schrader had on his face, in the pictures Charlotte had seen of him, a pronounced scar from a harelip operation. It did not seem plausible to Charlotte that she could have met a boy with such a scar and forgotten him, nor did it seem plausible that anyone on the L-1011 with Marin had ever spoken highly of the house on California Street, but maybe the boy's mother was trying to tell her something. Maybe there was a code in that peculiar stilted diction. Maybe Enid Schrader knew where Marin was.

"I think we should meet," Charlotte said guardedly. "Could you have lunch at all? Today? The St. Francis Grill?"

"Delightful. Why."

"Why what?"

"Why the St. Francis Grill?"

"I just thought—" Charlotte did not know what she had just thought. She had rejected the house because it was watched. She had hit upon the St. Francis Grill as a place where all corners of the room could be seen. "Is there somewhere you'd rather go?"

"Not at all, I don't keep up with where the beautiful people eat. Not to worry about my recognizing you, I've seen pictures of you."

"I've seen pictures of you too."

"Before," the woman said. "I meant before. Pictures of you and your beautiful home."

Charlotte had met the woman at one-thirty and at two-thirty the code remained impenetrable. The woman did not seem interested in talking about her son, or about Marin. The woman seemed interested instead in talking about a friend who had a decorator's card.

"You'll adore Ruthie." The woman was drinking dai-



quiris and had refused lunch. "I'm getting you together soonest, that's definite, a promise. Meanwhile I'll borrow her card and we'll do the trade-only places. How's Tuesday."

"How's Tuesday for what," Charlotte said faintly.

"Monday's a no-no for me but if Tuesday's bad for you, let's say Wednesday. Earliest."

"Listen." Charlotte glanced around the room before she spoke. "If there's something to see I think we should—I mean, could we see it now?"

"But I haven't got Ruthie's card. I mean unless you have—" The woman looked up. "What's the matter?"

"I don't think I know what you're talking about."

"I'm talking about taking you shopping." The woman's eyes reddened and filled with tears. "Unless of course you're too busy. But of course you are. Too busy."

Charlotte touched the woman's hand.

The last woman Charlotte had known to talk about "shopping" was her mother.

The last time Charlotte had been asked to go "shopping" it had been by her mother.

"Your ex-husband isn't too busy. I heard him on the radio. He was blotto but he talked to me. I called in to chat, he wasn't too busy to chat. Although blotto. On the radio. Whatever his name is."

"Warren." Charlotte did not want to hear about Warren on the radio. Leonard had once said that Warren could arrive in a town where he knew no one and within twenty-four hours he would have had dinner at the country club, been offered a temporary chair in Southern politics at the nearest college, and been on the radio. Charlotte did not want to think about Warren on the radio and she did not want to think why Enid Schrader was crying and she did not want to think about her mother shopping. Her mother had been shopping the day she died, at Ransohoff's. "His name is Warren Bogart."

"Whatever. The little whore's father."

The woman gave one last cathartic sob.

Charlotte reached for the check.

"My treat," the woman cried, her voice again sprightly. "You do it next time."

All the next day Charlotte could not erase from her mind the first newspaper picture she had seen of Enid Schrader's son. "They'll ditch the harelip," Leonard had said when she showed him the picture. "The harelip's the fresh meat they'll throw on the trail, they can't afford him, Marin's not stupid."

"I wouldn't rely on that," Warren had said.

Another picture Charlotte could not erase from her mind was her mother alone at Ransohoff's.

to Polly Orben's office, this isn't healthy." Leonard uncupped the receiver and spoke into it. "Try the other line, Suzy, see if you can keep your finger off the disconnect this time."

"Why don't you trot Suzy's ass over to Polly Orben's office," Charlotte said without turning around. She was watching the FBI man in the window of the apartment across the street. "Why don't you trot Warren's ass over to Polly Orben's office."

"Tell him we're going to trade off the felony and plead the two misdemeanors," Leonard said into the telephone.

"Warren and Polly Orben would be good," Charlotte said.

"And tell him I don't want any of that boom-boom shit at the hearing." Leonard hung up the telephone. "Speaking of Warren he says you won't see him. He says you misunderstand him."

"The fuck I misunderstand him."

"Felicitously put," Leonard said after a while.

"Tell him I'm in Hollister. Tell him I'm in Hollister and about how there's no telephone on the ranch."

"There are eight telephones on the ranch. On three separate lines."

"He doesn't know that."

"For Christ's sake, Charlotte, go to Hollister if you don't want to see him. Go now. Go right now."

"I can't actually go to Hollister."

"Why can't you, besides the fact that it might entail getting dressed."

She could not go to Hollister because she was afraid Warren might find her there, alone at the ranch. She could not go to Hollister because if Warren found her there alone at the ranch something bad would happen. This seemed so obvious to Charlotte that she could not bring herself to say it. "I can't go to Hollister because you have people coming to the house for lunch tomorrow."

"Tell me who I have coming to the house for lunch tomorrow."

"Coming to the house for lunch tomorrow you have..." She could not think.

"Coming to the house for lunch tomorrow I have... the leaders of... two dissident factions within... the Haight-Divisadero Coalition. You got a whole lot you want to say to them?"

Charlotte picked up a brush and began attacking her hair in abrupt chops.

"On the subject of day-care versus guerrilla theater. Maybe we could get Dickie and Linda up from Hollister and get their thinking?"

"I don't know why you put all those telephones on the ranch anyway."

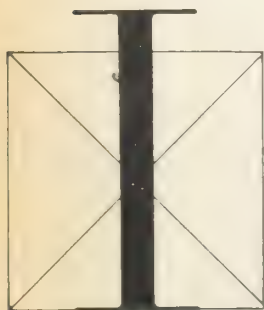
"I don't know, Charlotte. Communication?"

"Nobody in my family ever found it necessary to keep three different calls going on that ranch."

"Nobody in your family ever found it necessary to pay the taxes on that ranch, either. Tell me again why you can't go to Hollister."

The hair Charlotte pulled from her brush was dry and wiry and faded.

When Marin was small she had played a game with Charlotte's hair and called it gold.



HAVE A LOUSY TRIP to Philadelphia, lousy flight back, I watch my own plane blow a tire on closed-circuit TV, I go to my office, I find Suzy in tears because Warren camped in her one-room apartment, I come home and I find my wife hasn't gotten dressed in two days. I finish this call, Charlotte, I'm going to trot your ass over



"I feel so old," Charlotte said.  
 "Tell me why you can't go to Hollister."  
 "I keep remembering things."  
 "Most of us do. Tell me why you won't see Warren."  
 "You don't know what he wants."  
 "Of course I know what he wants. He wants you back.  
 You think I make my living being dense?"  
 "Then why did you ask?"  
 Leonard lifted a mass of Charlotte's hair and let it drop  
 through his fingers. "Because I was interested in whether  
 you knew it. You don't look so old."

**W**HO CAN SAY WHY CHARLOTTE left Leonard Douglas.  
 Maybe she thought it was easier.  
 Maybe she believed herself loose in the world, maybe she was tired, maybe she had just remembered that people died. Maybe she thought that if she walked back into the Carlyle Hotel on Easter morning with Warren  
 part Marin would be there, in a flowered lawn dress.  
 "It's too late," she said to her gynecologist the morning he confirmed that she was carrying Leonard's child.  
 "It didn't happen in time."  
*Somebody cuts you.*  
*Where it doesn't show.*  
 "I have no way of knowing about the cuts that don't  
 show."  
 "I know only that during the fifth week after the release  
 of Marin's tape Charlotte woke early every morning,  
 dressed promptly, and immersed herself in the domestic  
 maintenance of the house on California Street. She made  
 purchases. She replaced worn sheets, chipped wine glasses,  
 chipped plates. She paid an electrician time-and-a-half to  
 fix, on a Saturday, two crossed spots on the Jackson  
 clock in the dining room. She was obsessed by errands,  
 and she laid it to her pregnancy.  
 Leonard did not.  
 So entirely underwater did Charlotte live her life that  
 she did not recognize her preoccupations as those of a  
 woman about to abandon a temporary rental.  
 Leonard did."

**P**HOTOGRAPHS OF THE LAST evening Charlotte spent with Leonard Douglas appeared a year later in *Vogue*, Charlotte showed them to me.  
 There was Leonard, standing with an actor at the party in Beverly Hills, standing with his head bent, listening to the actor but looking somewhere else.

There was Charlotte, sitting with an actress at the party in Beverly Hills, Charlotte smiling, her eyes wide and  
 fixed and in the end as impenetrable as Marin's.  
 She had not meant to go with Leonard to the party

in Beverly Hills at all.

She had not even meant to go with Leonard to the airport.

But on the fifth day of the fifth week after the release of Marin's tape she had opened the door of the house on California Street and found Warren standing there.

"I guess you can give me a drink."

"Actually I'm just about to drive Leonard to the airport." She followed his gaze to the limousine idling at the curb. She had not until the moment intended going to the airport. "I mean, I'm not exactly driving him to the airport but I'm driving *with* him to the airport."

"I guess there's room for me."

In the car Charlotte had sat on the jump seat and fixed her eyes on the driver's pigtail.

"While you were upstairs Warren was telling me about this ninety-two-year-old Trotskyist he drinks with in New York," Leonard said. "This Trotskyist lives at the Hotel Albert. Naturally."

"Charlotte knows Benny," Warren said. "You remember Benny, Charlotte."

Charlotte had not remembered Benny. Charlotte had not even thought that she was meant to remember Benny, whoever Benny was. Benny was only Warren's way of reminding her that he had a prior claim.

"This Trotskyist drinks Pisco sours," Leonard said.

"Sazeracs," Warren said. "Not Pisco sours. Sazeracs. Benny always asks about you, Charlotte. You ought to go see him, he's not going to live forever."

Charlotte kept her eyes on the driver's pigtail.

"Neither is Porter," Warren said. "In case you forgot."

"Neither is Charlotte," Leonard said. "You keep this up. Something I've never been able to understand is how you happen to know more Trotskyists than Trotsky did."

"You know more Arabs, it evens out. What am I going to tell Porter, Charlotte?"

"All of them ninety-two years old," Leonard said.

"I said what am I going to tell Porter, Charlotte."

"All of them sitting around the Hotel Albert drinking Pisco sours," Leonard said.

"Sazeracs. What do you want me to tell Porter on his deathbed, Charlotte?"

"Personally I want you to tell Porter about this ninety-two-year-old Trotskyist," Leonard said. "You're overplaying your hand, Warren. You're pushing her too hard while she's still got an ace. I'll lay you odds, she's going to see her ace. She's going to say she's coming with me."

"But I am." Charlotte looked at Leonard for the first time. "I am definitely coming with you. I always was."

"No," Leonard said. "You were not 'always' coming with me. You see, Warren? Bad hand. You didn't pace your play."

"But I always wanted to go with you," Charlotte said.

"Definitely you always wanted to go with him," Warren said. "You haven't met enough Arabs."

"He's going to Los Angeles and Miami," Charlotte said.

"Or enough Jews," Warren said.

Because Charlotte had gotten on the plane with no bag and because Leonard's presence was required at the party



where the photographs were taken, a \$250-a-ticket benefit in a tent behind someone's house in Beverly Hills, Charlotte was wearing, at the time she was photographed, a dress borrowed from the wife of the record executive who had organized the evening, a dress made entirely of colored ribbons.

"You shouldn't have told Warren to keep the car," she had said as she put on the dress. "He'll keep it all night. I look absurd."

"You wouldn't if you had a tambourine," Leonard said. "He'll keep it all week."

Charlotte sat down. She was very tired. She did not think she had ever been so tired. She did not see how she could finish tying the ribbons on the dress.

"Sometimes I wish," Leonard said after a while. He began tying the ribbons Charlotte had abandoned. "I don't know."

"Sometimes you wish what."

"Sometimes I wish you could just fuck him and get it over with."

"I don't want to."

"Charlotte. Shit. I know you don't want to."

A stage had been constructed over the swimming pool of the house in Beverly Hills and several entertainers auctioned their services, singing and dancing and placing surprise telephone calls to friends and relatives of high bidders. Leonard raised \$500 by dancing the limbo under a pole held by the record executive's wife, a young woman with pale blond hair like Marin's and a Brahmin caste mark painted on her forehead, and, at Charlotte's table, an actress who had visited Hanoi spoke of the superior health and beauty of the children there.

"It's because they aren't raised by their mothers," the actress said. "They don't have any of that bourgeois personal crap laid on them."

Charlotte studied her wine glass and tried to think of something neutral to say to the actress. She wanted to get up but her chair was blocked by three men who seemed to be discussing the financing of a motion picture, or a war.

"No mama-papa-baby-nuclear family bullshit," the actress said. "It's beautiful."

Charlotte concentrated on the details of the financing, the part to be played by the Canadians, the controls exerted by the *Crédit Suisse*.

"I know why you're crying," the actress said after a while.

Morocco would lend its army. Spain would not. Two-eight above the line.

"And I'm sorry, but that's exactly the kind of personal crap I never saw in Hanoi."

The flash bulb blazed.

Charlotte smiled.

The flash bulb dropped on the table.

"Did you know I spent a night once with Pete Wright," Charlotte said to Leonard as he led her from the table. "Did you know I did that and forgot it?"

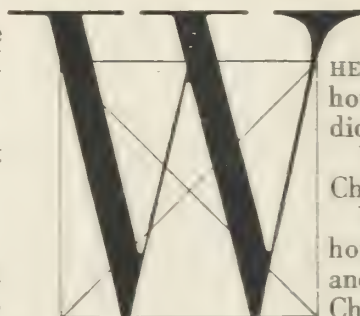
"You didn't forget it at all," Leonard said. "You told me the first night I met you."

"I am so tired. I am so tired of remembering things. Leonard. Tell me it's because I'm pregnant."

"I wish I could," Leonard said.

Leonard took Charlotte back to the Beverly Wilshire

but she continued crying, so Leonard, because he was due in Miami the next day to assist in the sale of four French Mirages from one Caribbean independency to another, called the record executive and borrowed a company Lear to fly Charlotte home. Two hundred sixteen thousand dollars was raised that night to benefit some one of Leonard's clients. Charlotte was unsure which until she saw the pictures in *Vogue*. She left the dress made entirely of colored ribbons on the floor of the suite at the Beverly Wilshire. I look at those pictures now and I see on Charlotte's smile.



WHEN WARREN CAME to the door of the house on California Street Charlotte did not appear.

When Warren telephoned the house Charlotte hung up without speaking.

When Warren stood outside the house on California Street at two A.M. and threw stones at the windows Charlotte closed the shutters.

When Warren left the note reading, "THIS IS THE WORST BEHAVIOR YET" in the mailbox of the house on California Street Charlotte tore the note in half and avoided the rooms which fronted on the street.

When the two FBI men came to tell Charlotte that the boy with the harelip scar had been apprehended on an unrelated charge in Nogales, Arizona, and had hung himself in his cell Charlotte left the room without speaking. That was on the second day of the sixth week after the release of Marin's tape.

"You're aware Mark Schrader killed himself in Mexico," the reporter said on the telephone.

"Arizona," Charlotte said. She was still lying on Marin's bed. The sound of the man's voice hurt her ear and she held the receiver several inches away.

"About Mark and Marin—"

"Arizona. Not Mexico. He killed himself in Nogales, Arizona."

"Absolutely. My slip. Would you say that Marin was romantically involved with Mark?"

"Romantically involved," Charlotte repeated.

"Involved in a romantic way, yes."

*The harelip's the fresh meat they'll throw on the table they can't afford him, Marin's not stupid.*

*I wouldn't rely on that.*

"You see you're thinking of Nogales, Sonora," Charlotte said.

"Absolutely," the reporter said. "Very good. About Mark and—"

"You don't have to congratulate me. For knowing the difference between Arizona and Mexico."

"About Marin and—"

Marin had a straw hat one Easter and a flowered lace dress.

*This is the worst behavior yet.*

Warren gave her his coat.

"Fuck Marin," Charlotte said.



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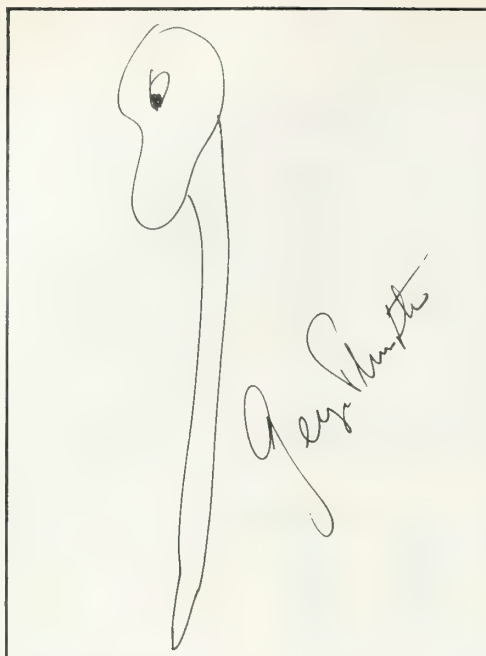
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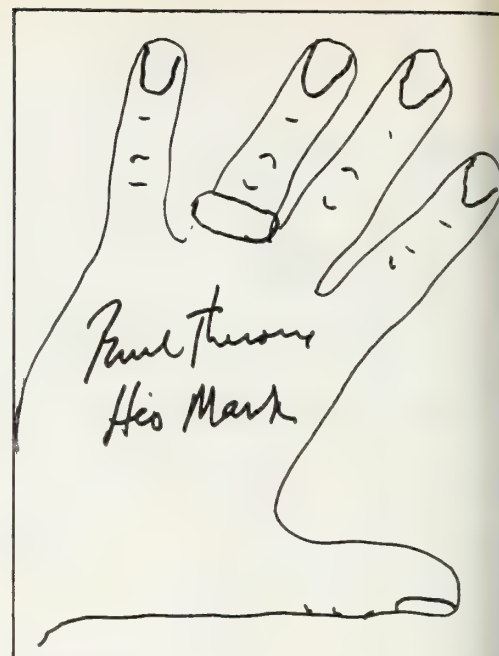


# SEVENTEEN SELF- PORTRAITS

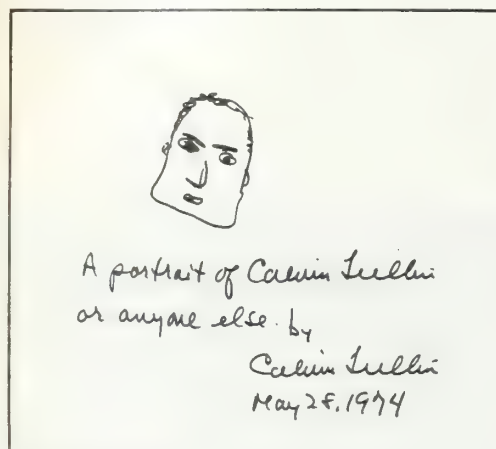
Often, when reading a short story or article, we wonder what its author looks like. Some magazines allay their readers' curiosity with photographs, but these, more often than not, disappoint all concerned. Surely, we think, that spindly little man could not have written that debonair travel article, nor that ferret-faced woman that sensitive piece of fiction. For our readers, therefore, we present a unique gallery of portraits of our contributors, drawn by themselves and collected by Burt Britton of the Strand Bookstore in New York City.



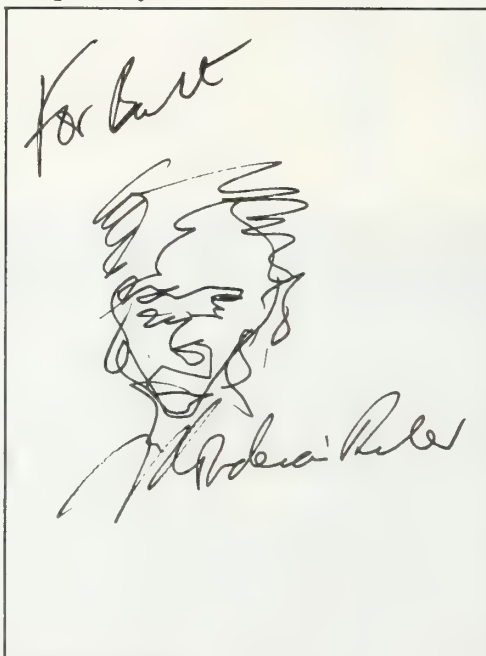
George Plimpton



Paul Theroux



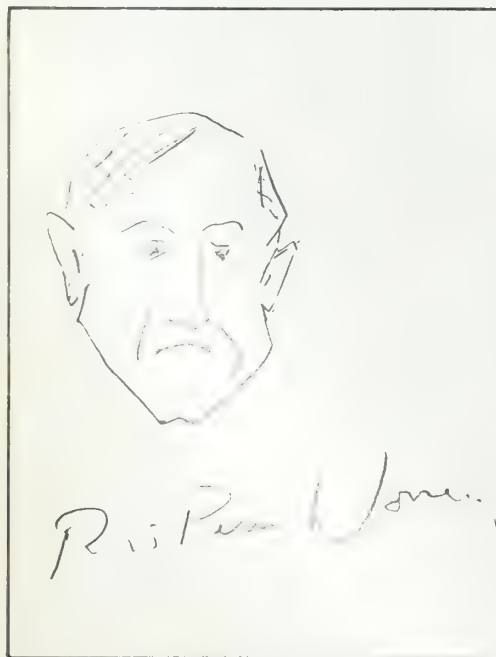
Calvin Trillin



Mordecai Richler



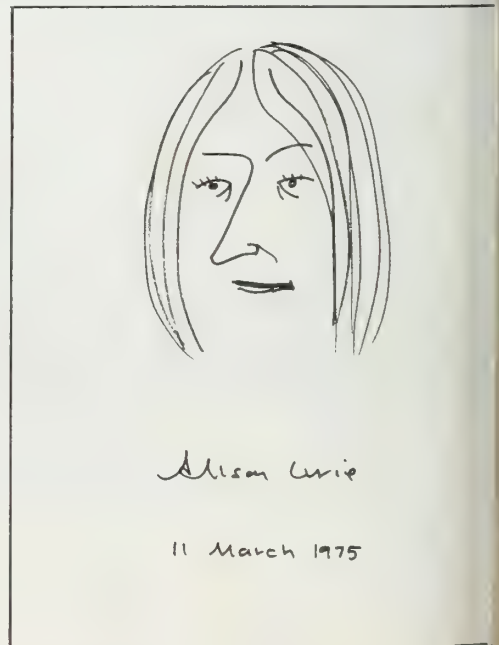
Robert Stone



Robert Penn Warren



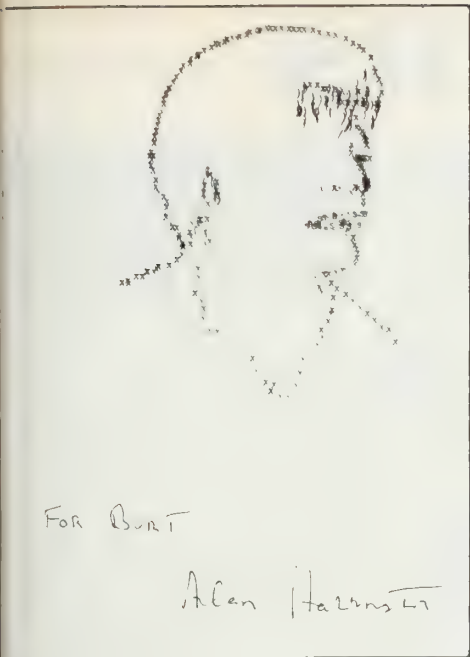
John Gardner



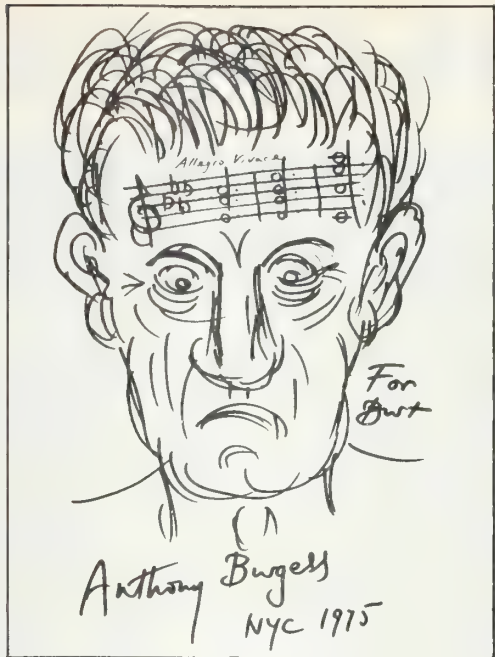
Alison Lurie

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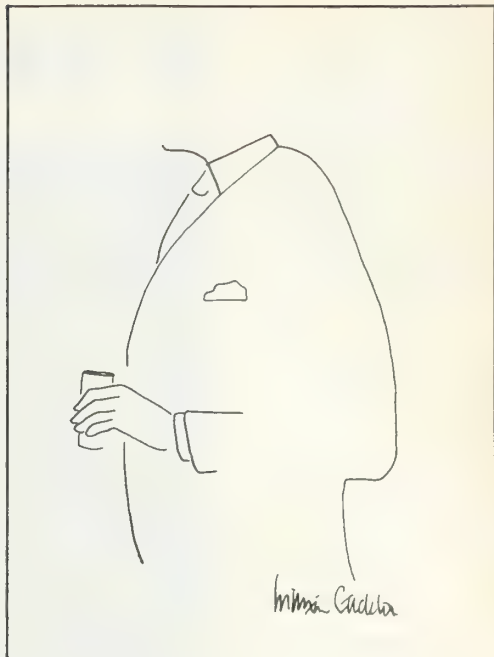




Alan Harrington



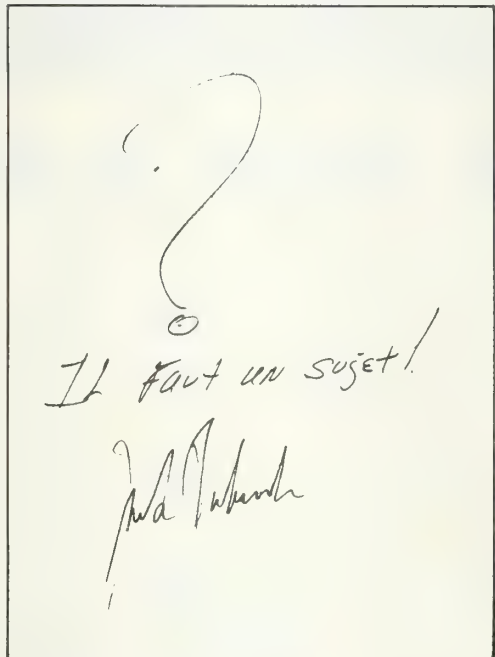
Anthony Burgess



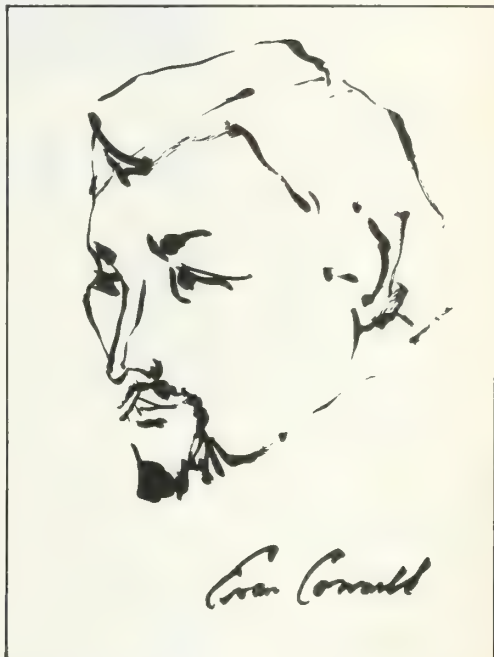
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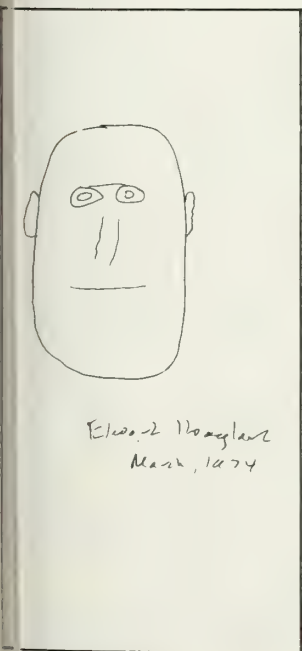
Paul Godwin



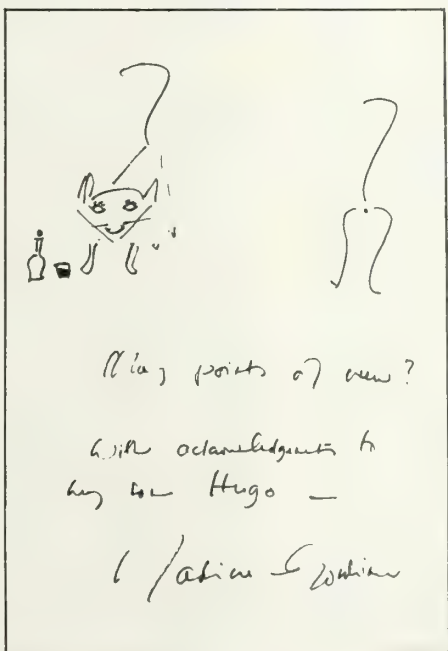
Jack Richardson



Evan Connell



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Tom Wolfe



# TWO CHEERS



## FOR SOCIALISM

Notes on the  
prospects for a  
planned  
economy

by  
Michael Harrington

**N**ATIONAL ECONOMIC PLANNING is an idea whose time has come. It will certainly be a central issue in the debate over economic policy in the current Presidential campaign. Yet no one is quite sure what the idea is.

This is so even though conservative Republicans find the main legislative proposal for such planning to be infuriatingly, even insanely, explicit. That is how they attack the Full Employment and Balanced Growth Act of 1976, known in the halls of Congress as Humphrey-Hawkins because its originators are Rep. Augustus F. Hawkins and Sen. Hubert Humphrey. At first glance, the average citizen might agree that Humphrey-Hawkins is indeed much too specific. It requires systematic federal coordination of all economic policies, including public-service employment, to reduce adult joblessness to 3 percent within four years and to keep it permanently at, or beneath, that level. In the pursuit of that goal, it authorizes the President to present an annual plan to Congress which "shall set forth the foreseeable trends in economic and social conditions, provide estimates of the unmet social needs of the Nation, and identify the human, capital and national resources available and needed" to achieve the goals of the plan. The plan is even supposed to "reorder national priorities" and develop full-employment programs in such areas as transportation, energy, food, and health care. Small wonder that the

former chairman of Nixon's Council of Economic Advisers, Herbert Stein, bitterly commented, "everything is to be assigned priori except people's use of their own earnings."

The fact remains that the plan is not too precise. A careful reader of Humphrey-Hawkins will find that, in the seemingly sweeping section on reordering priorities, the bill very plainly states that the plan will not go into programmatic detail, that it will only be a long-run guide to optimum private, Federal, State and local government action." Humphrey-Hawkins is subject to as many wild different interpretations as *Rashomon*.

Wassily Leontief won the Nobel Prize in Economics for mapping the reciprocal interdependencies of a modern economy by means of "input-output" equations. For him, national planning is, above all, a mechanism which makes economic decisions transparent. If, let us say, the government carefully calculates the rate of growth for the next period, defining both normal private and public expenditures and any further outlays required to keep unemployment at, or beneath, the 3 percent rate, then the corporation, the city government, the trade union which acts in accordance with these projections increases its own advantage by voluntarily promoting the common good. Thus planning is "indicative." Washington doesn't order anyone to do anything.

Leontief is so convinced that his version of planning is in the interests of big business

*Michael Harrington's books include The Other America, The Accidental Century, and Toward a Democratic Left.*



as well as of the society, that he has predicted that it will be the corporate executives who will take the political lead in urging it. Somewhat surprisingly, Leonard Woodcock, president of the United Auto Workers, shares this view and has joined with Leontief to form a committee of industrialists, trade unionists, intellectuals, and politicians to push for planning. There does seem to be evidence that Leontief and Woodcock are right. Henry Ford, for instance, has publicly advocated "more central planning."

To be sure, he immediately added, "Not the kind of central planning the Russians have, where they order the whole damned economy from a central plan. I'm talking about a federal planning organization that collects and disseminates information. I'd bring in the Council of Economic Advisers and others, and I'd give this group Cabinet status so that it's not just stuck away in some back room." This, obviously, is very much what Leontief and Woodcock have in mind.

Felix Rohatyn, an investment banker and member of the prestigious firm of Lazard Frères, goes considerably beyond Ford, advocating a scheme which he says "can be perceived as the first step toward the state planning of the economy." Rohatyn belongs to a new, exclusive breed. He is a sophisticated compromiser who shuttles between capitalists, trade unionists, and politicians, building up a seemingly impossible consensus by means of complex proposals which contain something for everyone. He favors the idea of a new Reconstruction Finance Corporation which would provide federally funded equity capital to big companies in a time of trouble. Washington could exit only when private profitability had been restored. The first proponent of this bold theme which Rohatyn describes in radical language was Herbert Hoover.

As far back as the 1930s, such businessmen as Bernard Baruch, Gerard Swope, and Henry Arriman, the president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, were also for "national economic planning." Yet business today is far from unanimous on the issue. Herbert Stein, the Nixon economist, thinks that planning is being smuggled into the society behind the attractive skirts of the demand for full employment. It is, he comments in the shocked voice of a true believer in Adam Smith's invisible hand, a proposal "not only for getting everyone employed, but getting them employed producing the 'right' things." Stein hopes that the planning talk is empty and vague; but he fears that it is not. Secretary of the Treasury William E. Simon is blunter than Stein: planning, he says, is socialism.

This is the antiplanning argument that the voters will surely hear from the Republican campaigners this year.

Gar Alperovitz and Jeff Faux also worry about the possible abuses of planning. They are liberal activists, the codirectors of a project which is exploring economic alternatives to the present capitalist organization of the nation. Their analysis was the main topic of discussion at a conference of some eighteen hundred left-wing Democrats held in Louisville last fall. Through the plan, Alperovitz and Faux told those Democrats, it is possible that "high prices, high interest rates, and high taxes will be forced upon the public at large." For them, the plan loomed as an instrument of corporate domination.

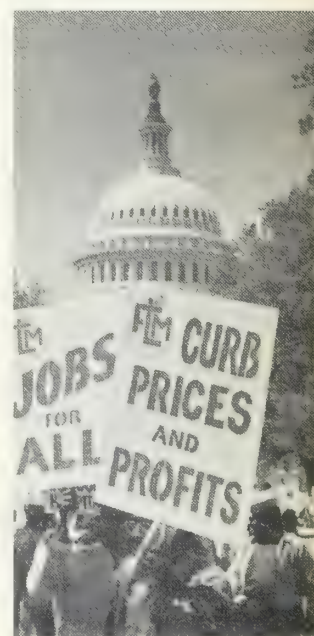
While Alperovitz and Faux are about as far left as mainstream politics go, Charles Schultze, Arthur Okun, and James Tobin, all prestigious representatives of the Democratic party's traditional liberal center, and architects of the "new economics" as advisers to Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, believe that Humphrey-Hawkins will set off a roaring inflation in America. The bill, Arthur Okun told *Business Week*, is "beautiful poetry." And Sar Levitan, a manpower expert and longtime advocate of full employment, has said that achieving the Humphrey-Hawkins goals would require an unprecedented 7.5 percent rate of annual real growth between now and 1980.

### A meaning in the muddle

**W**HAT IS THE IDEA whose time has come? Planning is socialism, we are told, planning is shrewd capitalism; it is a guaranteed job for every worker, and it is federally subsidized market research for private enterprise; it is full employment, and it is an impossible, inflationary poem. There is a meaning in this muddle, but one can grasp it only if one understands that Humphrey-Hawkins, or any other law mandating planning which might be passed in the foreseeable future, is a point of departure, a method rather than a result, the beginning of a process. The import of its language will be decided not by judges or scholars, but by contending political forces, whose interpretations will be decided by means of conflict.

This diary of my encounters with those forces as they began to sharpen up their definitions is intended to reveal more about planning than the strident, extravagant abstractions one is certain to hear in the current Presidential campaign. Although I am very much

**"The bill is only a starting point, but it is one which has been postponed for more than thirty years."**





Michael  
Harrington  
**TWO CHEERS  
FOR  
SOCIALISM**

in favor of Humphrey-Hawkins, that has not made me insensitive to its ambiguities and imperfections.

NEW YORK CITY. November 27—The Marc Hall is an appropriately spare hall, located in a basement on Union Square, the traditional rallying ground of the Left. On this Saturday, about one hundred and twenty trade unionists, about a third of them black, many of them young, gather here. Gus Hawkins, the courtly, soft-spoken Congressman from Los Angeles, leads off, enthusiastic about the need for his bill, pessimistic about its immediate prospects. John Conyers, a leading member of the Black Congressional caucus, follows Hawkins and is even more emphatic about the difficult situation in which the legislation finds itself. Some of the Representatives who have formally endorsed it, he comments wryly, probably wouldn't vote for it.

There are discussions of full-employment economics, and pointed, if friendly, debates over whether there should be affirmative action in firing as well as in hiring, i.e., if seniority rights should be abridged so that minorities and women are not specially victimized by the recession. In addition to the unionists, there are left-wing academics, such as Robert Lekachman and Helen Ginsberg, and labor intellectuals, such as Al Nash, who came to the universities from the shop floor and the socialist movement. I give the closing speech, a denunciation of the Ford Administration and the bankers, who, in the name of encouraging capital formation, propose generous tax breaks for the rich and austerity for everyone else. Humphrey-Hawkins, we all agree, is an absolute necessity.

The meaning of the event seems obvious. A labor movement enduring the worst recession in a generation, together with blacks, the most abused group in the crisis, is pushing for full employment along the lines proposed by Gus Hawkins. The intellectuals and radicals are there, just as they were in the Thirties, to put the struggle in a historic perspective which might not have occurred to its more pragmatic militants. That meaning is obvious and utterly misleading.

We had known when we called the conference that we were bucking a profound tradition: union activists do not go to weekend meetings. But we thought that the severity of the unemployment crisis and the reports we were getting of rank-and-file pressure on local leaders would change the old patterns. We were wrong. Twenty unions had endorsed the conference at the Marc Hall, and all of them had sent representatives. With only one exception, however—Local 1199 of the Hospital

Workers—those who came were paid staff, not the shop stewards and plant floor activists we had sought to rally.

We had encountered one of the strangest almost eerie, aspects of the recession-inflation of the Seventies. Those most intimately, even tragically, involved in the collapse had not been galvanized into action. Logically, the highest unemployment rates in a generation—an average 8.5 percent out of work in 1975—should have sent both the jobless and the threatened workers out into the streets demanding full employment planning. Yet when people get fired, they often lose contact with the union, becoming dropouts rather than militants. And in the first stages of a downturn, those with jobs are primarily looking for ways to hold on to what they have. It is a time when solidarity forever has less appeal than a bird in the hand.

I overstate the case, of course. There are many, many workers who are angry and frustrated, and the corporate order, the polls tell us, has less legitimacy than at any time since the Great Depression. Yet what is most striking is the relative quiet within the labor movement. Another anomaly surfaces when I chat with Hawkins on his way out of the meeting. The AFL-CIO is not backing his bill which articulates a demand it has been making for more than thirty years, that every worker be guaranteed a job.

Hawkins is cautious about this; negotiations are, after all, still under way. Apparently the AFL-CIO is bothered about the clause that gives an unemployed worker the right to sue the government in Federal District Court if it does not find, or create, a job for him. Meany and company feel that this provision is too tricky, arguing that it could create a lot of work for lawyers, but not for the rank and file. There are other rumors floating around, including one that the AFL-CIO believes it is impossible to get the jobless rate down to 3 percent in eighteen months, a Humphrey-Hawkins mandates.

**O**AKLAND, CALIFORNIA. October 17-18—There is a rich subculture of the California Left visible in the hall of the Alameda Central Labor Council Temple in Oakland, at the West Coast Conference of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee. The tables which ring the main auditorium offer literature on the municipalization of power and the struggle against Pacific Gas and Electric, the creation of state-owned oil and gas corporation, detailed schemes for a radical change in the state tax



structure, and land-reform proposals to curb the power of agribusiness in the state, to name a few issues. For the most part, the advocates attending the meeting are anything but political misfits. They often possess a great deal of information in their chosen area of struggle; they offer specific legislative changes, not vague utopias.

A good many of these young people belong to the class of the 1960s. They were active in students for a Democratic Society, traveled to Mississippi to fight for black rights, marched against the war. Then it seemed to the media that they had all but vanished into thin air, as the campus of the mid-Seventies returned to the traditional mood of apathy. Yet, they are to be found in local-issue organizations. In California in the fall of 1975, some of them were working for Fred Harris; others were active in Tom Hayden's Senatorial campaign. They have not earned national attention, in part because many of them have learned to shun it, in part because they have been concentrating on prosaic battles, such as fighting a bank which refuses to invest in the very neighborhood where it raises its money from local depositors.

At Oakland, talking to Derek Shearer, one of the brightest of the class of the Sixties, I sense that these people are in movement. Shearer is a journalist, organizer, and ideologue. In the summer of 1975 he and his boss, James Lorenz, the director of employment development for Gov. Jerry Brown, had been rejected. Typically, Shearer and Lorenz had come up with a state employment plan which relied on private community groups—unions, environmentalists, neighborhood organizations—to administer local job programs. The official bureaucracy would be bypassed; health clinics would be built, and old buildings rehabilitated, and, if the pilot projects succeeded, as many as 100,000 people would be hired, at the community level. This proposal is not as utopian as it might seem, for some experiments along these lines have been carried out. Lorenz and Shearer thought that Brown, with his Zen politics and his enthusiasm for "Buddhist economics," would like their idea.

However, the *Oakland Tribune* got a copy of the Lorenz-Shearer memo and headlined it on page 1 as "BROWN'S SECRET PLAN FOR WORKING STATE." The fact that cooperatives were mentioned became "Communes Key to Plan." A conservative State Senator said that the proposal was "a socialist document prepared by a socialist appointee of a socialist-thinking governor." Lorenz was fired shortly after those revelations, presumably because he had become a political liability. Shearer left with

him. Now I was talking to Shearer in a short-order restaurant. Remarkably, we agreed on full-employment planning. Shearer, and those like him, have not given up their community organizing emphasis. But under the impact of the highest jobless rate since the depression, they had come to accept the necessity of a planned federal intervention for full employment.

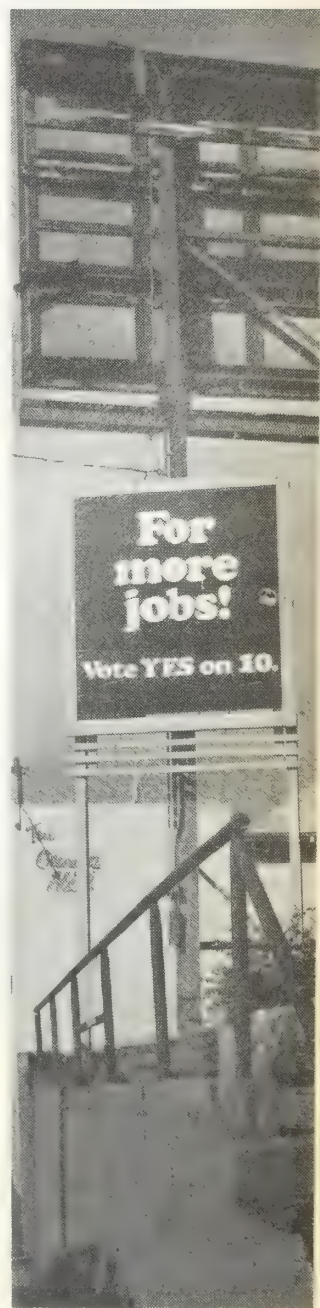
WASHINGTON, D.C. November 11— My conversation with Shearer goes on, although he is no longer part of it. I am at an Eastern center of the Sixties alumni network, the Institute for Policy Studies. The IPS was organized during the Sixties as a left-wing think tank. Throughout the activist period it had close, though informal, ties with SDS and the antiwar movement and was even placed under FBI surveillance for that reason. Around the table are Marcus Raskin, once a young member of John Kennedy's national security staff, and a founder of the IPS; Richard Barnett, the author of a number of influential books and most recently coauthor of *Global Reach*, a study of the multinationals, which has been translated into a number of languages; Richard Sklare, a successful businessman from Ohio who not only contributes money, but also full-time organizing, to causes he endorses (he has flown in from the Moscone mayoral campaign in San Francisco); James Ridgeway, the muckraking journalist; Karl Hess, a former Goldwater campaigner turned antiwar anarchist; and others.

All of these people would have been critical of, or downright opposed to, liberal proposals for economic planning as of five years ago. In one way or another, they would have counterposed an emphasis on localism, on participatory democracy, to what they regarded as the bureaucratic centralism of the traditional liberals. They have not given up those values, but they have concluded that full employment can only be achieved and maintained through federal action on a national scale. They realize from the bitter experience of the Nixon and Ford recessions that high unemployment rates subvert the very possibility of neighborhood creativity.

### The specter of revolution

**N**EW YORK CITY. November 10. Morning—The insouciance of history is incarnate in the site of the first conference of the Initiative Committee for National Economic Planning. Here, in the paneled precincts of the Harvard Club, a trade unionist—Leonard Woodcock of the UAW—

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and a Nobel laureate—Wassily Leontief—had brought together businessmen, scholars, labor leaders and even one Presidential candidate, Terry Sanford of North Carolina, to discuss planning.

At such affairs, well-known people usually repeat their well-known positions, or make well-known objections to other people's well-known statements. This meeting was less liturgical. A businessman—the gathering was off the record and I will only identify participants by generic tags—began the questioning after a brief, low-key statement by Leontief summarizing his proposal to make the economy transparent. Was the idea of planning revolutionary? I was struck at this point, and at several other occasions during the day, by how profoundly conservative and ideological American executives are. They pride themselves on their pragmatism; they meet payrolls. Yet they, like the editorialists of *The Wall Street Journal*, are in the grip of a few powerful ideas as to how the free market rationally allocates resources, a commitment which is no less passionate because businessmen will betray it in a moment to gain advantage—a tax break, a subsidy—from Washington. Here was an extraordinarily moderate and lucid presentation by Leontief which asked for little more than socialized data which all parties could use in their own way, and it had evoked the specter of revolution.

A liberal professor immediately answered the businessman. Planning, he said, was basically a conservative idea, a necessary technique for maintaining the status quo, a shrewd concession which would forestall dangerous disorders. An economist with ties to the labor movement intervened in much the same way. He was, he said, against any “compulsion” in the plan—which was a diplomatic way of saying that the project must respect the sovereign right of corporations to make basic economic decisions.

There was much talk about getting the facts about the economy. I commented that one's definition of facts depends on one's social class. All those who were currently arguing that there was a capital shortage were, not so accidentally, concerned about the welfare of corporations. Conversely, all those who denied the existence of such a shortage were, not so accidentally, concerned with eliminating unemployment by means of federal spending. One of the defenders of the essential conservatism of planning confessed that he was depressed, and even shocked, by my statement, since it implied that there was no neutral way of getting the “facts.” He was right.

The incident reminded me of something

that happened in 1959. My first article on poverty was in galley at *Commentary* magazine when I got an anxious phone call from my editor. *Fortune* had just reported that the American income structure was in fine shape. Would I resolve the conflict in our statistics? There was no conflict. *Fortune* and I were using the same figures. They saw that 75 percent of the society was not poor and exulted in the fact; I saw that 25 percent of the Americans were poor and responded with outrage.

NEW YORK CITY. November 10. 1:00 P.M.—I dash down from the Harvard Club to a meeting at Federal Plaza of the Joint Economic Committee of the Congress where I am to testify. Senators Humphrey, Javits, and Taft are there.

The hearing room is a makeshift, not a noble chamber like the Senate caucus room. The witnesses are seated at three tables which have been pushed together to simulate a massive conference table. When I arrive, the morning's detritus of press releases and newspapers and place cards for those who testified earlier has not yet been removed. The proceedings begin in desultory fashion, with people still milling around when Hubert Humphrey calls the meeting to order.

The first witness is Victor Gotbaum, director of District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, the union which enrolls over 100,000 city workers in New York. Gotbaum is one of the most articulate progressive trade unionists in America; he is also an old friend from the Fifties. He talks of the New York crisis of how the average union member makes only \$9,600 in an area in which the Bureau of Labor Statistics' “modest but adequate” budget for a family of four is now in the neighborhood of \$15,000. He explains in response to questions that his members' pensions do not provide the luxurious retirement that is regularly reported in the press. Above all, he talks movingly about the personal impact of the sweeping municipal layoffs.

Humphrey and Javits respond respectfully politically. But the truly significant reaction is Taft's. He is amazed by Gotbaum's figures remarking that neither he nor his constituent in Ohio knew about them. So here is a professional politician, with a full-time staff including research aides, and after six months of the New York City crisis, which is debated in the press as well as the Senate, he is shocked by some of the elementary economic numbers. This is less a criticism of Taft than an example of the point that had occurred to me earlier in the day: that one's perception of fact is a political act, profoundly influenced by



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one's class. The idea that planning can be objective and technocratic is clearly a delusion.

After Gotbaum has spoken, I endorse Humphrey-Hawkins, but then go on to criticize it and the basic assumption of all liberal Keynesian policies of the last generation on the ground that it assumes that the private sector is fundamentally sound in its decisions, requiring only a helping hand from the government. A much more thoroughgoing and structural change is needed, I assert, including a TVA-like public gas and oil corporation, the nationalization of the railroads, and government employment as a first, rather than a last, resort. Humphrey took careful notes and seemed to be following my argument seriously. Senator Javits merely remarked that I had brought a "creative tension" to the committee's deliberations. Senator Taft said nothing. He seemed bewildered, as if my transgression of the ideological limits of American discussion had made my words come out in Greek.

At the end of the hearing, Jerry Jasinowski, a staff expert, confirms some gossip I had heard. Negotiations are under way between Humphrey and Hawkins on the one hand and the AFL-CIO on the other. Leon Keyserling, the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers under Truman, is playing a key role in reformulating the bill. There is hope that the unions will come around to a new version of it.

NEW YORK CITY. November 10. Evening—Back at the Harvard Club, Senator Humphrey spoke at the dinner session of the planning conference to an audience of businessmen, labor leaders, and intellectuals. He was—after more than six hours of hearings—bouncy, ebullient. He quoted Secretary Simon's absurd declaration that the planning and fiscal questions gave America a choice between freedom and socialism. Then Humphrey did a brilliant fugue on the theme that this thesis always pops up when anyone urges the most modest reform of the system. In the process, he gave implicit witness to the profound conservatism of the American ideological consciousness. In this country, which has not had an effective, mass socialist movement for more than half a century, the liberals must constantly defend themselves against the preposterous charge of "socialism." So every change in the system has to be presented primarily as a prop for the status quo. The inherent value of a reform—the fact that it *is* a reform—has to be carefully ignored. Planning is only the most recent case in point. The obligatory conservative rationale for liberal ideas then influences the actual draft of legislation and the practice of government policy. The Left is required to anticipate, and acquiesce in, its own demise.

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY. November 10.—The National Issues Conference of the Democratic party has attracted about 1,800 people and most of them are then major Presidential candidates—Carter, Jackson, Shriver, Udall, Bayh—to Louisville. The mass of people are activists in the party, most of them from its liberal wing. The UAW is deeply involved in organizing the conference, so there is also substantial trade-union representation.

As I walk to a meeting called by the socialists in attendance—we attract an audience of about two hundred delegates—I look out the window. In the middle distance there is a chanting, jeering, menacing mob. Right below the police are lined up in riot order in their visored helmets with nightsticks at the ready. The doors to the auditorium were locked. Violence on the inside had been vigorously discussed. How to get full employment for American workers; now a mainly working-class crowd led by members of the UAW and directed against a meeting put together by Leonard Woodcock, seemed bent on violent confrontation, as part of a protest against school busing. Eventually, the conference organizers and the demonstrators worked out a compromise. Leaders from the protest would be admitted as regular delegates the next day and given the right to the floor during the discussion.

The economic debate at Louisville centers on a remarkable document by Gar Alperovitz and Jeff Faux, probably the most openly leftist statement ever made the focus of a Democratic party meeting. A planned economy, they argue, is inevitable. The only question is, Who is going to run it and for what purpose? They condemn the sophisticated corporate technocrats who want the government to shore up the system, and conclude that "direct public ownership of some key manufacturing and generating facilities" is necessary if the whole mechanism is to be something more than a strengthening of the status quo. But that ownership, they insist, need not be bureaucratic; it can be participatory and in many cases decentralized.

That merging of the Thirties emphasis on planning and the Sixties passion for popular participation which I had sensed in Oakland and at the Institute for Policy Studies is here presented in the form of a serious alternative to a major political party. During the discussion, John Kenneth Galbraith, who is in substantial agreement with Alperovitz and Faux, makes an insightful and witty attack on those who always turn the Democratic party toward dead center and ignore the need for serious change. But then Charles Schultze, an intense



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# INDOOR GREENERY

The current enthusiasm for houseplants has not gone unrecognized here at *Harper's*. Most people's offices house at least one palm, fern, dracaena, or wandering Jew. Watering cans and sprayers abound. Perhaps, then, a degree of self-interest led us to the New York Botanical Gardens in search of unusual products to display on this spread.

The outdoor and greenhouse exhibits charmed us, as they do

the thousands of visitors who pass every year. But it was in the museum shop that we discovered why we had come. There, for sale, were some of the most beautiful prints and illustrations we had ever seen. We learned that the proceeds would help support this nonprofit institution. We decided to show you a selection and crossed our fingers in hopes that the color separations would do them justice.

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These poster prints are taken from some of the illustrated plant books found in the Botanical Gardens' rare book collection.

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Jan Commelin was director of the Amsterdam Botanical Gardens during the late 1600s. This illustration comes from his book published in 1698. 24" x 36". \$6. (A-4)



**Commelin, 1698**

The New York Botanical Garden Print Series



## CULINARY HERBS



## WALL CHART SERIES

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## SAND DUNES

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In the museum shop we also spotted an equally beautiful 1977 plant calendar and a unique and functional terrarium that is highly recommended. These items are on page 107.

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Michael  
Harrington  
**TWO CHEERS  
FOR  
SOCIALISM**

and brilliant economist with the air of a Marine about him, attacks the planners sharply. Washington has to play a role in the economy, to be sure; Schultze is a very capable Keynesian liberal. But choices should be made, as far as is possible, on the free market.

I am struck once again by how Adam Smithian the Keynesians are; they have become the intelligent conservatives of our age. But the rank-and-file conservatives out in Middle America are so sectarian that they think their friends are the enemy.

WASHINGTON, D.C. December 15—I meet in the House of Representatives with the Democratic Study Group, the organization of liberal members of Congress. It is a hectic day, toward the close of the session at Christmas, and members move in and out, leaving for votes, returning for discussion. I argue that the Sixties did not really “throw money at problems.” Our failures, I say, are the result of government following corporate priorities—giving federal subsidies to auto corporations to hire the hard-core unemployed rather than creating jobs for them in the public sector where they could meet social needs—not of radicalism. I receive confused signals from my audience. One Congressman tells me that his constituents would rebel if he mentioned that he was even considering public ownership of the railroads, which I cited as an example of positive structural change; another remarks that his people are so sick and tired of the rail subsidy rip-off that they would buy nationalization in a flash. It is further confirmation of an impression I have had for some time: that America is moving vigorously left, right, and center, all at once.

WASHINGTON, D.C. March 18—The hearing room in the Senate Office Building is crowded for the second day of discussions commemorating the Employment Act of 1946, which committed the nation to full employment but did not guarantee everyone a job. Carl Albert opens the session; Hubert Humphrey is in the chair. I am one of four people who have been invited, not simply to testify, but also to question the Administration’s witnesses, Arthur Burns and Alan Greenspan.

I tell Humphrey that I support his bill but think it much too moderate and conservative, with its implicit assumption that public employment is a second- or third-best alternative, a matter of last resort. Rather than letting the corporations allocate the most talented workers to overbuilding Florida condominiums or Las Vegas casinos and having the government hire private sector rejects, social projects should be first-priority undertakings, designed to shift labor into genuinely useful

employment. This is what Herbert Stein fears so greatly; it is what I advocate.

I point out that our uncoordinated and massive federal subsidies often have counterproductive, antisocial effects. I cite the railroad as an example of how public expenditures can ruin a public service, and propose that the entire system be publicly owned rather than just its decrepit, unprofitable portions.

Some time later Arthur Burns answers. I don’t know if the waves of hostility I feel derive from Burns’s manner, or if his manner adds to the offensiveness of what he is saying. He is extremely deliberate and slow; the pip-puffing is a major prop. Yes, Mr. Harrington, Burns comments in a tone of schoolmaster weariness, of course the government should be an employer of first resort on some occasions; and I would be happy to see the railroads nationalized, after people like you have ruined them by overregulation. He is cool and unworried about national economic planning; he is getting ready to turn it to his own, conservative purposes.

At the hearings, I pick up the revised Humphrey-Hawkins. The unemployed worker’s right to sue the government for a job is on the 3 percent unemployment target has been redefined as 3 percent adult unemployment, which means 4 percent, or even 4.5 percent unemployment; and the new target is to be reached in four years, not eighteen months. The planning provisions are new, a somewhat watered-down version of proposals originally made by Senators Humphrey and Javits. They had originally called for a special planning apparatus, as Henry Ford advocated, but the language introduced into Humphrey-Hawkins from their bill simply requires existing Administration agencies to plan.

Most of these changes amount to making the proposal more moderate. Yet the assertion of a legally guaranteed right to a job for citizens remains. That is the heart of the controversy which has been going on since Franklin Roosevelt proposed that notion in the Presidential campaign of 1944, and it will be hotly debated in the Presidential campaign of 1968.

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A nonnegotiable right

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**W**ASHINGTON, D.C. May 18—The day’s platform committee hearings are a typical Democratic party event—confused, even tumultuous, energetic, and still hopeful. When I pull up to the Hyatt Regency in a cab, there is a picket line of NBC technicians. I cannot cross it; neither will any of the other



ses. Morning hearings are canceled and, after several hours of milling around and butchering and gossip, we all reconvene at a Senate caucus room. I am there as the spokesman for Democracy '76, an extraordinarily broad coalition of the Democratic Left which has been endorsed by ten international union presidents, about half the Black Congressional caucus, leading feminists, liberal Representatives, and the like. We are not simply for Humphrey-Hawkins and tax reform aimed at the privileges of the rich; we also call for the "democratic control of investment," i.e., for Washington to utilize its tens of billions in subsidies to business in order to meet social, rather than corporate, needs.

I am convinced that Humphrey-Hawkins is the free. Hubert Humphrey is there, speaking forcefully on behalf of its principles; Tip O'Neill, the House Majority Leader, endorses on behalf of his colleagues; Teddy Kennedy, who evokes a standing ovation before he says the word, is for it, too.

NEW YORK CITY. May 27—Carl Rowan has an article in the *New York Post* that makes me think that I may have been too optimistic at the platform hearings. He says liberal economists are raising the specter of inflation and suggesting that Humphrey-Hawkins is dangerous in this regard. In part, this is true and compelling. Because the AFL-CIO feels—quite rightly—that the American worker was the victim of Nixon's wage and price controls, not the rich the beneficiary, that delicate substance has been finessed in the bill. I phone a friendly staffer on the Joint Economic Committee and he tells me that beefing up the anti-inflation provisions will not affect the main thrust of the law.

What about the right to a job? That, he says, is not negotiable. It will remain. Still, I am concerned. The liberal economists are ending in an old, and antisocial, pursuit: raising the minimum "necessary" level of joblessness in the American economy. Right after World War II, a mainstream Keynesian would have set such "frictional" unemployment at 1.2 percent. Under Kennedy, the ultimate goal was 3 percent, the interim target 4 percent. Now Humphrey-Hawkins has effectively set the ultimate goal somewhere around 4.5 percent, and liberal academics are complaining that this figure is dangerously inflationary. In a sense, the liberals are making a radical argument. They are saying that the American economic system requires, as a precondition of its existence, what Karl Marx called the "reserve labor army" of the unemployed. They are meekly adapting to a necessity which radicals want to abolish. In my advocacy

of Humphrey-Hawkins, am I saying that the American economic structure is really better—more just—than the liberals assert it is?

No. I have always known that Humphrey-Hawkins was only a first step, that it could work only if other measures were taken. Whereas liberal economists assume that the system as it stands is a given, and that therefore social decency is impractical, I assume the contrary, that the system should be changed. I welcome the contradictions Humphrey-Hawkins would pose because they could drive us beyond our most moderate starting point.

**T**HE MORAL OF THIS CHRONICLE? That planning is not planned. It is not an idea which penetrates and shapes reality when its time has come. It is a process in which the major actors—politicians, workers, conservatives, liberals, intellectuals and the rest—behave in a way that is predictable after the fact but difficult to anticipate. There is a rationality in the confusion I have just described. The plan is determined, not by the dictates of social reason, but by the power configuration of the society. In the end, all those competing, contradictory forces will be plotted along a line set by the strongest among them—which is to say, by corporations. Although the other groups do not fix that outcome, they influence it. So it is that the status quo has been forced to the left during the past generation even though it most emphatically has remained the status quo.

It is this ambiguous and complex reality which the candidates will reduce to militant abstractions in the coming months. With full knowledge of the retreats, the evasions, and the unresolved issues, I will be with the Democrats, and for Humphrey-Hawkins. The bill has been watered down, of course, yet it still defines a legally guaranteed right to work. That is only a starting point, but it is one which has been postponed for more than thirty years. The planning provisions are deliberately vague, yet they do commit the nation to long-range projections and policies. That might even be the Archimedean point from which the people could begin to gain democratic leverage over their own economic and social destiny. In the short run, perhaps American capitalism can be made to function as well as European capitalism, whose unemployment rates have been about half of ours throughout the postwar generation. That is not a basic and fundamental transformation of the society; it is a step forward. For now, only two cheers for national economic planning. But two rousing cheers. □

**"In the first stages of a downturn, those with jobs are looking for ways to hold on to what they have. It is a time when solidarity forever has less appeal than a bird in the hand."**



HARPER'S  
OCTOBER 1976



# MY LIVES

by Michael Holroyd  
A biographer's autobiography

**T**HOUGH I NEVER WENT to a university, I was unable to avoid all schooling. At school I learned physics, geometry, algebra, a little Latin, less Greek—all those subjects of which I now know nothing. After this followed two unlikely years in a lawyer's office, from which, as a writer, I retain some knowledge of bankruptcy and an apprehension of libel. I completed my formal education by doing two years' National Service in the army—an episode that has some of the qualities of Gothic fiction. I wanted to be a paid and published writer, but breaking into the literary world is not easy, especially if you live, as I did, thirty miles west of London at Maidenhead Thicket.

There is no reference I know of in any of the great novels, even those of Jane Austen, to Maidenhead Thicket. To the intelligentsia of the world, Maidenhead is a bit off the map, and it was difficult to spot the literary advantages of living at such a place. To start with, I wrote to the local paper, *The Maidenhead Advertiser*, and offered my services to its as yet nonexistent book pages. Surely, I queried, they needed for this enterprise such a person as myself, someone unencumbered by university degrees, someone rich in knowledge of the byways and culs-de-sac of life. Their answer came back: they did not.

To succeed I would have to kick the dust of Maidenhead from my heels. There was no virtue in the place. At first, being unembarrassed by money, I could find only intermit-

tent quarters in the consulting room of a London doctor. There, on his dark leather couch the only other occupant a suspended medical skeleton, I passed my nights, rising at dawn to avoid the invalids who came hammering at the door for lotions and cures. Later I put up in the Mayfair attic of a house belonging to a school friend—living beside the water tank wrapped up on cold nights in brown paper something between a tramp and an undelivered parcel. During this time I penned short stories and composed verse, the influence of which veered drastically between Wordsworth and T. S. Eliot.

I was not, however, the only poet in the family: there was my father. Fearing for my health, he had opposed my writing late into the night. But, seeing no hope, he suddenly swung in my direction, and with great handsomeness. While I tinkered exquisitely with one or two impressionistic paragraphs, adding beside the water tank, a comma here, a semicolon there, he polished off back at Maidenhead five full-length unpublished novels. One cliff-hanger concerned the fate of a carbon paper factory, and the relative merits of various brands of this confection (the "Fine Flimsy" versus the "Stable Standby"). It was he pointed out, by implication a political drama.

In earlier years my father had had a previous brush with literature. Wandering round Paris at the end of the war in the uniform of a Royal Air Force Wing Commander—o-

*Michael Holroyd is at work on a biography of George Bernard Shaw.*



Winko," as it was sometimes called—he had married a glamorous French publisher. They hoped to get rich on cheap books, and for a few blinding seconds it seemed as if they couldn't fail. My father had many qualifications: unassailable energy, some knowledge of aircraft, and the ability to speak French like a native—of Maidenhead. Somehow, incredibly, it had all gone wrong. But, pending his collapse, he had encountered several writers to whom, on my behalf, he now appealed. There was a pause while these ladies and gentlemen reached back in their memories: then, with varying degrees of bitterness, they retorted, warning us against any infiltration into books. But by that stage we were too far gone.

### Pyrrhic success

FROM THE *Twentieth Century* magazine I at last received a commission to review an anthology of Oxford and Cambridge writing, *Light Blue, Dark Blue*. I worked on this piece for weeks, revising it intensely, and at last turned in a review that some months later was actually published. The following year a check arrived for a little under £1. Here was success, but in a form that suggested limited horizons. A more promising start, ironically, awaited me back at Maidenhead. While at the public library, I took down some books at random and came across the work of Hugh Kingsmill.

Whatever success I may achieve as a writer, will owe to the example of Hugh Kingsmill. I never knew him. By the time I came to his books that day in the library, he had already been dead several years. But what I read gave me the courage to continue trying to write. For it was he who made literature real to me, who made the connection between what we read and how we live. There are some writers obviously gifted that their failure to achieve recognition astonishes us. Kingsmill didn't waste words, and in a society that pays by the word he remained poor. But his was an original voice. He judged literature by its truthfulness and by its power to reveal individual truths through humor, pathos, tenderness. He had a gift for spotting humbug, and his judgments, delivered with wit and epigrammatic flair, are moralistically intuitive to an extraordinary degree. What he offered me was not part of the schoolroom, but what goes on outside it, what is felt rather than endured. My first biography was about Kingsmill himself, and it was while writing this that I happened one day to collide with a future subject, Augustus John. There were no formal

introductions. The impact took place on the edge of a pavement in Chelsea, and, except for its contribution to the value of coincidence, was profoundly superficial. John, then in his young eighties, had "lunched well." He hesitated tremendously on the curb. Like a great oak tree, blasted, doomed, he seemed precariously rooted there until, unintentionally assisted by his future biographer, and, accompanied by a cacophony of shouting brakes and indignant hooting, and a whiff of burnt rubber, he propelled himself triumphantly across the road, and was gone. I stood there wondering how he had survived so long. Even in those few blurred moments, his extraordinary physical presence had struck me forcibly. I mentioned the incident to my father, and he, a good barometer of such matters, observed that I was bumping into the right people.

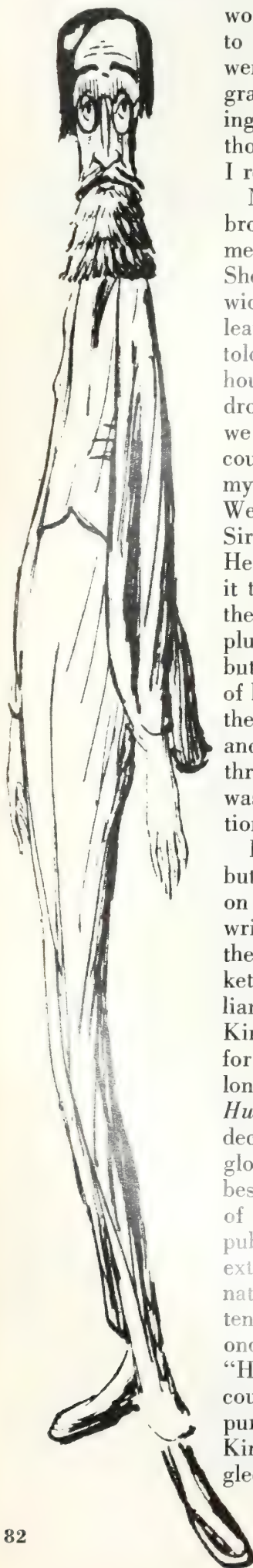
But for the time being my thoughts remained with Kingsmill. I had made contact with the Kingsmill family through friends, and was invited to dinner to meet them at the flat of one of Kingsmill's daughters, a strapping ex-chorus girl who, after the appearance of my book, became a nun. In my nervousness I arrived too early. Pacing the street, I couldn't fail to notice that the building was in flames with various fire-brigade engines in atten-

**"I put up in the Mayfair attic of a house belonging to a school friend, wrapped up on cold nights in brown paper: something between a tramp and an undelivered parcel."**



Michael Holroyd





dance. I was too paralyzed with politeness to volunteer help, suspecting there may have been some culinary disaster about which it would be tactless for an aspiring biographer to inquire. When things had cooled down I went in. The evening threw up some photographs of Kingsmill's death mask, a smoldering tobacco pouch, and other impedimenta, though little of more direct literary use. But I refused to be daunted.

My next call was on Kingsmill's elder brother, Sir Arnold Lunn. "My wife," he told me, "doesn't function too well in the evening." She was, he added, "beyond organizing sandwiches." So the two of us went out to dinner, leaving Lady Mabel in bed. She was, I was told, an insomniac, but, left to herself for hours on end in the dark, would sometimes drop off out of sheer boredom. After dinner we returned to the flat so that Sir Arnold could present me with one of his books for my biography. Lady Mabel had nodded off. We moved through the library like ghosts, Sir Arnold leading with a candle in his hand. He quarried out the book, signed it, and gave it to me in a whisper. I breathed my thanks, then fumbled my way out. On the staircase, plunged into total darkness, I felt for the light button and, pressing it, released a fearful peal of bells into the Lunn sleeping quarters. I saw the lights flash angrily on under the door—and, coward that I was, I fled. Looking through the book when I got home, I saw it was full of Swiss mountains, without a mention of Kingsmill.

By sheer obstinacy I finished my biography, but the publishers to whom I sent it insisted on returning it to me as if, to quote another writer, "it had been a tennis ball sent over to them for that purpose." John Davenport, Hesketh Pearson, Malcolm Muggeridge, and William Gerhardie, who had been friends of Kingsmill's, did their best to help. Gerhardie, for example, contributed to *The Spectator* a long essay entitled "The Uses of Obscurity." *Hugh Kingsmill*, Gerhardie wrote, was a work declined by so many publishers (in such glowing terms) that it "may fairly rank as the best book never published." On the strength of his article I gambled on being solicited by publishers and at some expense, prepared extra copies to meet this demand. Unfortunately, Gerhardie had also slipped in a sentence revealing the dreadful fact that I had once been a promising squash racquets player. "His father," Gerhardie reported, "though encouraging a literary career, regrets that, in pursuit of the quite hopelessly neglected Kingsmill, Michael should be seriously neglecting his squash." From publishers and

poets I received letters exclusively on matter of squash. Kingsmill, once more, had been neglected.

I think I may claim without boasting that my life of Kingsmill is not good. But eventually it was brought out by Martin Secker the doyen of British publishers, who, seeing some merit in it, published it at his own expense, allowing me an advance on royalties of £25. Though this (to use a phrase of Kingsmill's) looked "more like a retreat than an advance," it was a generous gesture. Malcolm Muggeridge contributed a splendid introduction, and the reviews were kinder than they need have been. We lunched, Martin Secker, Malcolm Muggeridge, Hesketh Pearson, and myself, at the Café Royal, and Martin Secker was able to report that, following a very favorable review in *The Observer*, sales had topped thirty-nine copies.

**T**O MY FATHER IT WAS CLEAR that something more was needed to transform the book into a popular success. He had given birth one night to an idea from which it was becoming increasingly difficult to dissociate ourselves. We should, he insisted, throw a party. It would be an astonishingly grand affair. We would interview our bank managers, hire glasses, fill them to the brim with champagne and brandy and lump of sugar. We would muster plates of cold meat. There would be brown and beige and pink meats available for all. My father's dog knew the dog of a person my father suspected of being a bandleader. From two leads' distance, my father proposed to interview the man and, if his answers proved satisfactory, engage him professionally. In his generous imagination, he had peopled the Thicket with celebrities—Cyril Connolly, J. B. Priestley, Dame Daphne du Maurier—moving gracefully about (as in some ballet) with their champagne and meat and sugar, and putting Margaret and Hugh Kingsmill on the map. This plan was frustrated barely in time by the happy intervention of a disastrous libel action.

My next biography, an almost interminable *Life of Lytton Strachey*, grew naturally out of my book on Kingsmill (who had been unjustly accused of imitating Strachey); and my biography of Augustus John arose equally naturally from the Strachey book. By a coincidence, the first person asked to write a book on Augustus John—it was probably no more than the preface to a volume of reproductions—happened to have been Lytton Strachey. This was in the summer of 1913, and Strachey had little difficulty in refusing on the



found that it was too early—a judgment with which John agreed. After a decent interval of fifty-five years I simply took over where Strachey had failed to begin.

The seven years I had spent writing *Lytton Strachey* did much to prepare me for a biography of Augustus John. Their lives had crossed each other's at various odd points. Under the influence of John, Strachey had taken to earrings. For John this flashing jewellery was a symbol of gipsydom: it was the sort of ornament that would most have outraged his father, a respectable Pembrokeshire solicitor—which was sufficient recommendation in itself. "We are the sort of people, Anna," John remarked to the artist Nina Hammett, "our fathers warned us against." But for Strachey earrings had been the insignia of something else again, of his homosexuality, which, in the most theatrical manner, he fashioned into a weapon against Victorian morality; and also of his wish to escape from the intellectual wastes of Cambridge and Bloomsbury, and enter the knockabout world of British Bohemia. Augustus John was the acknowledged emperor of this kingdom, and he held court in Chelsea.

After Strachey, I was also looking for a more robust subject. One risk of being absorbed into my subject's world is that I acquire some of his mannerisms, or even illnesses. When I was deep in Lytton Strachey's life, what he called his "black period," with its details of faulty digestion and late-Victorian neurasthenia, I began to feel infected by several out-of-date diseases. If symptoms like these were posthumously contagious, then my next subject, I had resolved, should be someone of amazing virility and euphoria. In the event, Augustus John led me into difficulties that seemed to put my health at risk in quite another fashion. From the start he set a cracking pace, and I was not at all sure I had the equipment to keep up with him.

In his prime, John was a formidable personality, so biblical in appearance that devout citizens who passed him in the street would cross themselves. For his part, he liked to pat the heads of children in Chelsea, in case, he would explain, "they are some of mine." When he made his entrance into the Café Royal, it was said, young models had to be carried out fainting, while, on buses, old ladies, their eyes fluttering, would rise up and offer him their seats. I could match none of this. On bad days I became vulnerable to bouts of extreme absentmindedness, finding myself in some street or other and recalling G. K. Chesterton's poignant telegram to his wife: "Am at Crewe. Where should I be?"

"In his prime, John was a formidable personality. He liked to pat the heads of children in Chelsea, in case, he would explain, 'they are some of mine.'"



Augustus John

The Granger Collection



A metaphysical interview

WHILE I HAD BEEN WRITING *Lytton Strachey*, John's widow, Dorelia, had lent me some of Strachey's and Carrington's letters. After I finished my book I sent her a copy. It was so weighty a work, she told me, that she could read it only in bed. That, I replied, was where I had written it. Almost at once an intimacy sprang up between us. There had been some impressive protests after the book was published. "Can't see what the fuss is about," Dorelia instructed me. She wanted to know my next subject. What about Augustus John? I asked.

In the spring of 1968 I motored down to Fordingbridge, Hampshire, to see Dorelia John. I went first to gaze at the memorial statue of John, standing like some chocolate pugilist near the river; then to his grave, a plain white stone in a triangular field. Finally I came to Fryern Court, Dorelia's home and her creation. The drive coiled between magnolias and yellow azaleas, then opened out into a crunchy gravel sweep with a green fringe. Except for a small herd of flowers and kittens, the place seemed uninhabited. On the walls hung pink roses and an ancient clematis in whose matted stems the cats had made their nests. They lay there, sleepy in the sun, watching me as I hammered at the open door. Through the windows, also open, I could see dark empty rooms. I called through the windows, retreated a little into the foliage, and when I turned back there was Dorelia watching me from the doorway.

The purpose of our interview, Dorelia explained, was to discover whether my intentions were honorable. She led me into a room with a long refectory table and sat down at the end of it. I sat on her left, but she shook her head and pointed to a chair on her right. "Sit there," she commanded, "where the light shines in your face." As we were rearranging ourselves, her son Romilly tripped in, apologized for being late, and removed his hat. Since Romilly, then in his early sixties, he guessed, was the writer of the family (at that time, so I heard, he was contemplating a humorous work on engineering), his involvement in our discussions seemed sensible. But Dorelia thought otherwise. Gently, firmly, she suggested that he should run out into the garden and amuse himself there—perhaps even do something useful—while we discussed literary matters indoors. We would come and see how he was getting on when we had finished. He went out as obediently as a child.

Our interview was not a very precise business. Dorelia asked me several questions, and I explained that I wanted to present an accurate account of John's life, of which very little was then known, correcting the chronology of his own haphazard writings and, I hoped, getting my readers' eyes in for looking at John's best pictures, most of which had not been seen for twenty years. Dorelia was politely attentive, but more interested, I sensed, in finding out what sort of person I was than in what sort of book I wanted to write. We spoke a little of Lytton Strachey and Carrington, of my contact with Augustus in Chelsea, of my father and other literary figures such as Kinchell, of the peculiar habits of motorcars. It was difficult to understand how any of this could help her, unless it was to find out how I would apply my own biographical method to myself. But Dorelia had her own method of determining things. This made use of a ring and a piece of cotton—equipment that never failed her. She would tie the cotton to the ring, suspend it between two fingers, and determine the direction in which the ring floated. Since she said little to me that afternoon, I had no doubt my fate depended upon the clockwise or anticlockwise behavior of the pendulum.

At any rate I could do no more. We went into the garden to find out how Romilly was getting on. Dorelia was at home in that garden. Though smaller than I had imagined, and white-haired, she looked more like the mythical Dorelia of John's pictures than would have thought possible. We followed a path leading from the drive under magnolia and yew trees that once must have reached beyond the rhododendrons to a meadow that could see full of buttercups, but which now ended in nettles and a rubbish dump—where we found Romilly. He sprang to life as we approached and walked back eagerly with us for tea, prepared by his wife Kathie. There was nothing like an English tea for bringing the dictator in people. Like a good field marshal, Dorelia never wasted words. A few minutes, no more, and I was put to work cutting the bread. But when I showed her my slice, so immaculate to my eye, she raised her hand to her face and hooted with laughter. We ate what she called my "doorstops," while the cats weaved in and out among the plates and cups, and outside the light began to fade. Before I left, Romilly took me to one side. Should I in the heat and struggle of my searches, he asked, happen to stumble across the date of his birth, would I let him know? They all came out to hear me tune the engine, and waved as I sailed away back to London.



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LEADER, CHARTERED AND EDITED BY MARK PETERSON AND KAREN ROSS

Business	Start-Up Cost	Monthly Cost	Revenue	Profit
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Coffee Shop	\$15,000	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$1,500
Deli	\$20,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$2,000
Dry Cleaning	\$5,000	\$500	\$1,000	\$500
Florist	\$12,000	\$1,200	\$2,400	\$1,200
Grocery Store	\$30,000	\$3,000	\$6,000	\$3,000
Ice Cream Stand	\$8,000	\$800	\$1,600	\$800
Laundromat	\$18,000	\$1,800	\$3,600	\$1,800
Newsstand	\$2,000	\$200	\$400	\$200
Photocopying	\$3,000	\$300	\$600	\$300
Restaurant	\$25,000	\$2,500	\$5,000	\$2,500
Retail Store	\$10,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$1,000
Taxi Service	\$10,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$1,000
Tutoring	\$1,000	\$100	\$200	\$100
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**Graffiti**  
THE SOURCE OF THE REVOLUTION BY CLYDE BISHAM

FREE TOILET

Free women

**DAUGHTERS AND MOTHERS**

A "What if Women's" Column Compiled by Jeaneane Holm

Our mothers are our past but we are not their future. We are of them, so much the same, yet so different. It is time to change our lives, are we forgetting that? Can we transcend the bond into a dynamic relationship of knowledge, mental equality?

You can't beat it, it's no longer a race. You can do it in the road. You're never too old.

**Cross-Country Skiing!**

by Tina Ferrin

**THE MERTMULLER ETHIC**

Wanting to be popular, working to be popular, the only way to be serious politically.

by Barbara Garrison

**FATHERING INSTINCT**

Before my eyes, my children are acquiring dignity, they are nice people to know. This is not something I ever really expected.

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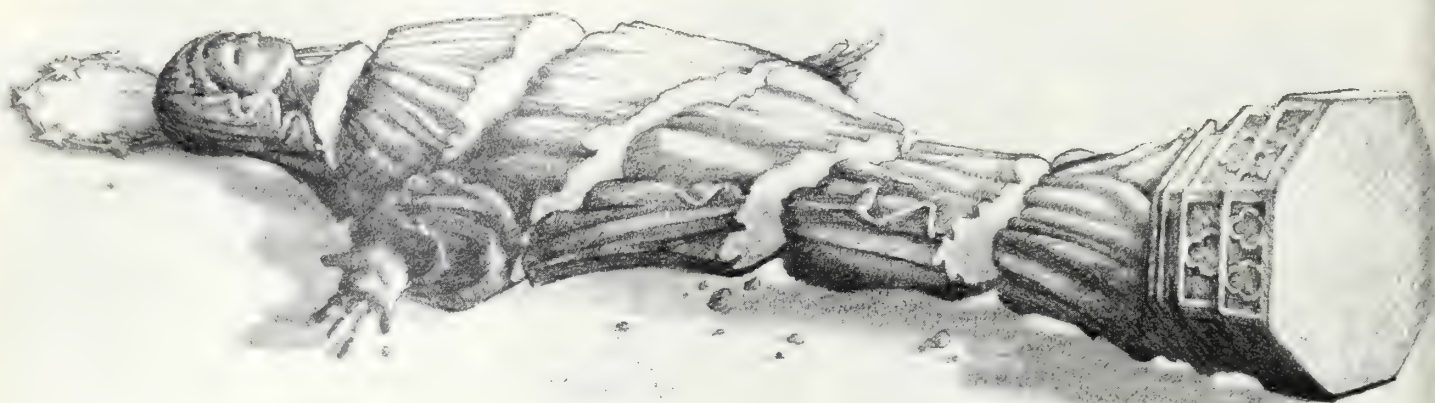
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# THE MOTHER OF US ALL

by Margaret Mead

**Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary**, by Marina Warner. Alfred A. Knopf, \$15. Illustrations.

**I**N A WORLD where social commentators have frequent recourse to historical reconstructions in which matriarchy is inferred because female deities, or doubtful little stone figures of post-menopausal women, turn up, this book stands out as a magnificent study of the whole development of the character of a single female deity. Marina Warner follows Mary, the mother of Jesus, mentioned so seldom in the Gospels that sometimes her very presence at a moment of crisis is in doubt, all the way to her ultimate removal from all relationship to anything human in the proclamation of the Assumption in 1950. She follows the developing and changing image of the Virgin through the bitter and intricate arguments of theologians, the partisanship of religious orders, the syncretism with local deities, the reflection of feudal society, so that each stage in the metamorphosis of this historically evolving character is exemplified. This is no matter of reconstruction of alleged white goddesses or problematical earth mothers, but a matter that can be documented in prose and poetry, in theological hairsplitting, in the pronouncements of the great

church councils, the mystical poetry of devotees, and the miracles authenticated by a panel of doctors at Lourdes.

The task—and this lovely book itself—is enormously helped by the importance of iconography in the Catholic church. At each stage in the various transformations of the Virgin, from a mien as severe as that of the majestic Christ of Eastern Orthodoxy, to a bejeweled queen, and again to a humble, barefoot woman, matching the dreams of St. Francis, there are mosaics, paintings, carvings, and statues to tell the story.

**M**ARINA WARNER'S book will prove both astonishing and enlightening to those for whom the arguments of theologians have become virtually unintelligible. It is difficult for the modern reader to recapture the extraordinary significance which intellectuals of the Middle Ages attached to such questions as the virgin birth, or the controversy as to whether the mother of the Christ was herself conceived without sin. It is necessary to keep reminding oneself that these intellectuals were celibates, committed to a way of life which associated sex with all that was evil. If sex was not evil, if

*Margaret Mead is curator emeritus of the American Museum of Natural History.*

the life of commitment to God was not more noble than a life spent yielding to man's animal-like tendencies, then their whole *modus vivendi* was called into question. Total commitment demanded total acceptance of a world view. It can perhaps be compared to the kind of commitment to Marxist orthodoxy demanded of dedicated Communists in the Soviet Union, in which even random accumulated bits of history became matters of dogma, articles of faith from which any deviation—even mental doubt—is sufficient to brand one a traitor. Yet in the contemporary world defection from orthodoxy in religious matters is so casual, much a matter of treating one's orthodox friends as anachronisms and one's newly converted friends as aggressive, that this detailed insistence on the vividness and depth of the arguments comes as a shocking, convincing, reminder of an earlier age. Noses were bloodied and wars fought; crusades were mounted against heresies as well as against the infidel; there were iconoclasts in the East before the Protestant destruction of Roman churches in Western Europe.

Besides giving us access to a depth of feeling and controversy which is so distant as to be almost unbelievable, the author has accomplished what I believe to be a unique feat: she has treated the Roman Catholic



reh—in all its changes, transformations, heresies, counterreforms, as, papal decrees, and changes of practice—as one among the great historical religions, and she has done as a scholar of comparative religions might, from the outside. At the same time, she communicates with faith and certitude what that faith meant to those for whom it was and the only true faith, the whole meaning of existence. We find such descriptions occasionally in sophisticated but empathetic accounts of the quest of a North American Indian, or the cults of an African deity, if the anthropologist has known believers intimately and been willing to follow their footsteps to lonely places where a supernaturally sent feather fell, or to listen to the tales of the Forest. The anthropologist can also place the particular of beliefs against widespread beliefs, alien and unshared, but deserving of respect. Such accounts are very different from the fanciful reconstructions of Greek mysteries, for they depend on the experience of living believers and on some sort of willingness to grant authenticity to a belief that is not shared. We hardly ever find this in treatments of our religious traditions, especially treatments of the past, where there are no living believers to invoke our understanding and sympathy.

Marina Warner has done just that. This is a book about the Catholic Church by a woman reared as a Catholic who can recall:

*On February 2, the Feast of the Purification, we wore starched white veils of tulle that stood out around us like a nimbus. With the medals of the Solemnity of Our Lady on blue ribbons round our necks, we proceeded with lit candles up to the communion rail to be blessed. Under the chapel there was a crypt, with a grotto of the Virgin made from chunks of cork bark from the Holy Land and hung all about with rosaries. On special occasions—the death of a pope, for instance—we were allowed to file into this darkened and scented place to kneel before the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes and recite our Hail Marys. The worship bit deep into our imaginations: I was no exception. Secretly and with intense excitement, I made myself my own grotto. Finding a rhododen-*



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*dron bush so old that its dusty dark green foliage framed a hollow chamber, I used to crawl in during breaks and after study hours and kneel and pray. "Holiness," as we called it, was natural, a part of living as simple as drawing breath. . . . I remember visiting Notre Dame in Paris and standing in the nave, tears starting in my eyes, furious at that old love's power to move me.*

The empathy from early childhood experience provides an essential background that perhaps can never be replaced by conversion or religious experience in maturity. So, in 1924, while sitting in a small graveyard in Paris from which the towers of Notre Dame were visible, Ruth Benedict, who wrote so movingly of the broken faith of American Indians, could exclaim with sad vehemence against its all being "for nothing."

**T**HIS IS A BOOK WITH something for everyone—for historians in search of real illumination on the question of sex roles, for the student of

psychology and culture—although Warner herself eschews psychological interpretation—and for those who take delight in other ways of life antecedent and closely bound to our own. It is a scholarly work; quotations are given in the original, followed by translations, and the full flavor of a Latin argument or a Middle English courtly poem is preserved. It can also delight the mind and eye of any reader alert to the vicissitudes of cultural change. One is led on from page to page, greedy for more.

Warner discusses each aspect of the developing Virgin myth. From the appearance of Mary, the Mother of Jesus of the Gospels, we follow the Virgin as she appears in the Apocrypha, and the intricacies of the theology of the virgin birth. We see the Virgin as a second Eve, as a model for virgins and martyrs, becoming inextricably blended into the earthy and rambunctious songs of the troubadours, whose love is purified into the Christian love of the Madonna. Warner shows us Mary as Mother, giving the Milk of Paradise, holding her dead son in her arms as the Mater Dolorosa, contrasted

with Mary Magdalene, the Penite Whore, and finally Mary of the Assumption.

Warner's style is so packed with scholarship, imagery, vivid selection and wry contrastive comment, that find I can only convey it by quotation. In her especially remarkable chapter "The Milk of Paradise," we find "Goddesses have suckled their divine offspring as far back as discovered civilization. . . . Two thousand years before Christ the Goddess of Ur offered her son her breast." Warner traces the idea of the nursing Virgin through the Middle Ages.

*The association of Mary's milk with her powers of intercession and healing inspired an extraordinary quantity of relics in Europe. From the thirteenth century on, phials in which her milk was preserved were venerated all over Christendom in shrines that attracted pilgrims by the thousands. . . . At other times, the milk had appeared miraculously, transcendental milk from heaven. It sometimes liquefied on certain feast days as if it were fresh. It had the advantage, unlike a saint's head or body, of being almost infinitely divisible. Calvin gave the subject a withering paragraph in his Treatise on Relics: "There is so much that if the Holy Virgin had been a cow or wet nurse all her life, she would have been hard put to yield such a great quantity."*

It was, Warner tells us, the Iminicans who were

particularly instrumental in fostering the cult of the Nursing Virgin. They were the only order in the Church that repeatedly and vehemently opposed the growing belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

When the opposition of the Iminicans was eventually overcome,

*the milk of the Virgin disappears from the Christian symbolic imagery. . . . One of the few contemporary survivals . . . is a popular German wine—Liebfraumilch: it is the end of the road of one of Christian mysticism's most potent images.*

In conclusion, Warner comments on the work of Falcon,

*who accuses Spanish gynecologists of retaining women in the*

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reproductive role by refusing to prescribe contraceptives and by increasing maternal suffering by insisting on "natural childbirth" and mother's milk.

The chapter ends:

*Apart from the milk the Virgin was allowed another human activity, another source of physical effluvia that expressed her motherhood of men: she wept. For at the same time her maternal love of the infant Christ was celebrated in poetry and art, her grief at the grown Christ's death inspired a passionate cult of the Mater Dolorosa.*

Although Warner rebels strenuously against the interpretation the church gives human passion, although she recognizes the extent to which the image of the Virgin was used to promote and rationalize the power of the church and the power of the state, although she laughs at absurdities which believers are expected to accept, she does not mock at itself. She can describe the myriads of relics of the Virgin's hair, "in shades of gold to red to blond to black and in quantities that would make a grizzly bear look hirsute," and then comment with understanding on the function of relics, however fabricated, however validated by centuries after the event, to establish a direct connection between the believer and God.

Warner takes serious issue with the church over the extent to which, by elevating the Virgin Mary's freedom from all sexuality, it has managed to devalue the position of all other women and denigrate humanity itself. Her purpose is twofold: to show how the cult of the Virgin, who suffers none of the normal pains of female: reproductivity, degrades these human aspects of motherhood and womanhood, and secondly to document the existence of a goddess, no matter how great her powers, does not mean that women have a high position, but rather the contrary. Contemporary feminists express the matter thus: "We are sick of brilliant exceptions." The Virgin Mary is the exception, "alone of all her sex." When all other women were humiliated, she could be exalted and treated with sensuous fervor. Kings, popes, bishops and nobles, who surrounded the women around them with

appropriate scorn, were all the more free to worship her.

While Marina Warner's own experience of a Catholic childhood left her with a vivid understanding of faith, and her scholarship in text and icon can bring the successive periods of the Virgin's metamorphosis alive for the reader, she is less successful in describing the waves of popular feeling which, manifesting themselves through public acts of piety and practice, forced the church to accommodate itself to their demands. She feels that such popular movements may have resulted from the Black Death and from the misery and suffering of the Middle Ages. Warner attributes to the Establishment a slow but strategic recognition of these public demands, but her argument is inferential and not as well supported. Here we are simply presented with statistics of death from plague and war, records of pilgrimages or votive offerings, and discussions of the popularity of the rosary.

There is ample documentation for the way in which the male imagination used the Virgin Mary as a projective screen, and it is all the more convincing because of the single re-

cipient. In these passages, the book is nevertheless reminiscent of Emily James Putnam's *The Lady*, or Simone de Beauvoir's chapter in *The Second Sex* on how men imagine women. Warner suggests that men who denied themselves women needed a woman on whom to pour out love, while women, suffering beneath a social system which denigrated womanhood, needed a woman's compassion to ease their pain. But she makes very little of the need for a feminine principle, however isolated, exceptional and inviolate, to soften the rigors of a ruthless overmasculine age.

One wonders how Marina Warner is able to maintain her double position of reverence within, and comparison and objectivity without; the closing paragraphs give the answer. The cult of the Virgin which she describes has ended, she believes, as in the doctrine of the Assumption, the Virgin becomes completely remote:

*As an acknowledged creation of Christian mythology, the Virgin's legend will endure in its splendor and its lyricism, but it will be emptied of moral significance and so lose its present real powers to heal and to harm.* □

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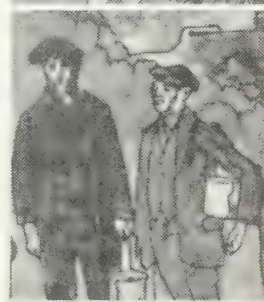
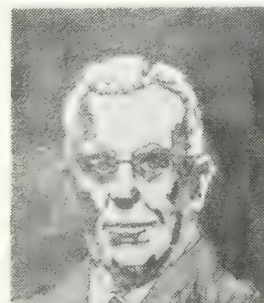
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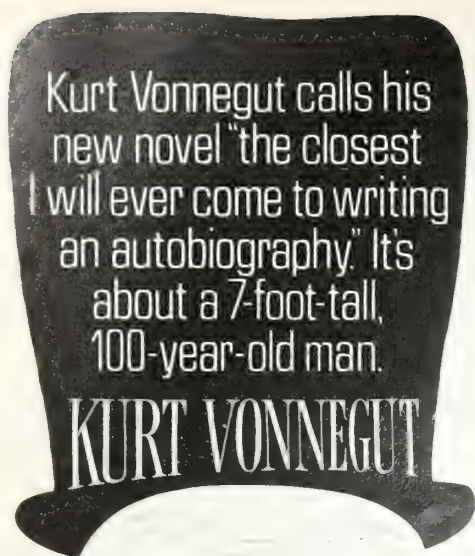
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# HEAVY WEATHER

by Ella Leffland

**A Sea-Change**, by Lois Gould. Simon and Schuster, \$6.95.

**I**F THIS NOVEL had been written ten years ago, I doubt that it would have been published. Bad writing in itself never kept a book from print if its subject was hot, but what audience in pre-lib days would have been thought ready for an oppressed woman who at the climax of a hurricane turns into the gunman she was raped by? Supernatural sex change could be entertaining (*Orlando*, *Turnabout*), but what would one make of the subject drenched in mythology and awash with symbols, a dark churning vehicle for the sufferings of Woman in a male-dominated world? It speaks well for the Seventies that people are no longer nonplussed by the charge of deep and damaging sexual inequities, that there is, in fact, a large readership for novels on this subject, but by its very largeness it almost guarantees itself a flood of bilge water.

There seems a special effectiveness in early revolutionary women's novels, as if the isolated voice cut sharper, as if ideas that work against their contemporary grain must move, necessarily, with greater force. It seems true of Charlotte Brontë's *Villette*, Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm*, Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, even *Orlando* (which, despite its whimsy, notched a deep score of indictments against sexism). Books written before their time have this advantage: they come through few and pure. Once an idea's time arrives, the novels rush forth in droves to meet the demand. Some meet it creatively; too many, like *A Sea-Change*, can only bore their readers and litter the milieu with paste figures and message-scrawled placards.

Jessie Waterman, a flagrantly beautiful ex-model in her thirties, is mar-

ried to the quintessential male chauvinist pig (among other things, calls all women by a grossly anatomical pet name); but she's too vague and passive to care. We find her the outset bound and terrorized by black housebreaker, an experier that leaves her with the subconscious impression that she has been raped with his loaded revolver, and a conscious realization that she has her controlling husband. When the couple move with their two young daughters to an isolated house on island, and the husband departs on an extended business trip, Jessie left with a change brewing inside her.

Although *brewing* isn't the right word. Inorganic characters have organic changes. Jessie is supposed to typify the submissive woman yesterday—"She was, after all, a new woman, but an 'old' woman a new time"—while yet possessing enough spark to show potential. That might have been achieved if the author had made the effort, but the method of creating characters is tack on statements about them she goes along, as if posting nouncements on a bulletin board. In the quarter of the way through the book, for instance, we're puzzled to realize that Jessie is "a strange and wonderful creature, full of discomfort insights and improbable passion since we've seen no hint of this creature on previous pages. Nor is it possible to reconcile the statement that Jessie is too lax and timid to order for herself at a restaurant, to learn to drive, with the statement that she walked out on a lover long standing one night, without a suitcase, to marry someone else. Lois Gould is much less interested in fixing the disparities of her heroine than in getting on with her sex change. With no emotional fullness at its disposal, the change takes place in a vacuum.



The change is one from helplessness to control, with a long concerted way to go before Jessie emerges as B.G. (black gunman). Though she grows more angular, as the male role with a woman and who has come for a stay, and is visited by a miraculous grasp of poetry, she is also in tune with the great, mystic feminine principle: she emanates a sense of universal wisdom, enjoys a vital kinship with natural phenomena (particularly with the approaching Hurricane Minerva), and develops a kind of psychic influence over other women, leading her daughters into a sudden passion with heroines from myth and history. Is she turning into Susan or Wonder Woman? The question has the earmarks of an important one as we read along, yet wonder in retrospect why Jessie didn't have gone from point A to point B.G. without all the goddesses and natural phenomena in between. Then what would the author have done for symbols?

These are so abundant and explicit that they deal the deathblow to any sense of verisimilitude the story might have possessed; nevertheless, there is a miracle of resourcefulness and ingenuity. Hurricane Minerva (goddess of wisdom and warfare) is ordered by Jessie. "Stormbusters use the latest 'techniques' for modifying a storm's behavior.... They would bottle their ejaculate in bomb bags and send it flying into her center.... Gang rape as a tool for basic research.... They would make the bitch, that was how they thought of her." Rape throws Minerva off course, and she wreaks death and destruction across the island. Andrea Island. The name must have significance, since virtually every name in the book has. Jessie, of course, is Waterman; and Jessie itself is as ambiguous as to gender, also suggests the renegade Jesse James. The postguardsman who comes to knock the house (and stays to fornicate) is known by two names, Surfman and Leo—a lion of the sea. The eldest daughter is Diane—Diana, goddess of the hunt?—who hunts in vain as she searches for her identity and finds it through Minerva, who leads her into the ocean of self-destruction (very). Andrea Island must be chosen to evoke the *Andrea Doria*. If the ship is reaching, it doesn't matter; we

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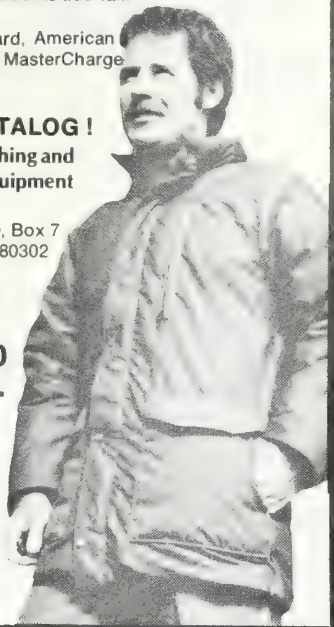
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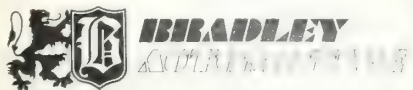
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## BOOKS

have been given carte blanche to play word games in the margin.

Diane and her younger sister are the prime source of symbols, engrossed in a collection of foreign dolls from which they have ousted all male representatives, their favorites the great queens—Elizabeth I, Catherine the Great, Hatshepsut—and one assassin, Charlotte Corday, whose career they're reenacting as the hurricane looms. Having made and filled a little bathtub for Marat and stabbed him to death in it, they wonder if they should proceed to Charlotte's execution. It seems a shame to ruin a good doll, but history is history. Just as the blade chops through, Minerva strikes. History is not necessarily right. Decapitated, Charlotte survives the deluge; a new and better head will be attached. The doll Hatshepsut has an easier time of it, being solemnly presented—just as Jessie turns into B.G.—with the black and kingly beard which the great queen used on state occasions.

**A**LL THE AUTHOR's concern seems to have gone into this allegorical network, leaving nothing for the writing itself. "Kate stood hesitantly at the door. Jessie? She was in the bathroom. I have to talk to you, Kate said. Come in, Jessie said. She had a green bath towel on, covering her breasts. Hi, she said." "Leo Bailey had yellow eyes and a curly reddish beard. His wet trousers were plastered tightly to his glistening body. Kate quickly brought him one of Jessie's green towels. Jessie quickly brought him a pair of Roy's trousers." This stagnant pool of prose occasionally whips itself into a froth. "She felt it constantly, an oceanic current pulling at her, stretching and tearing her from within. Sometimes the pressure made her weak; she would sink to the bed in a near-faint, or run out of the house, gasping for air, to climb a high rock and lie there like an outstretched seal, bleating and panting." Who is bleating, the seal or Jessie? This kind of clumsiness bespeaks an indifferent attitude to readers who might conceivably expect more than a scribbled first draft. The tone, as well, has a slipshod quality. Dealing with earthbound matters in her first chap-

ter, the author speaks unjarring what is probably her natural wit, one of brittle irony; but by a sea-change rich and strange voice slubbers around, becoming lugubrious, indignant, and dantic. We have no sense of a vision seized by an idea and wrestling it to the best of her ability; rather the writer seems to have looked at a surefire project and pulled occult feminism. Good, a bevy of symbols, sex thrown everywhere, a hurricane for excitement. The book can be figured out along the way, and, if possible, the meaning.

If Ms. Gould has figured out the meaning of her mishmash, *I Have Control* is clearly the book's purpose, and there clarity ends. It is that a great deal more has been thrown into the pot than the cooking of exploitee-turning-exploiter, that is the most I can make of the idea, it is a good one, politically valid. In every corner of existence—in political dictators in slums, in schools and business families, and in the sexual sphere it is the trampled-upon who often up the most vicious trampers. It is perhaps nothing so terrifyingly tragic as the passion for safety compels the oppressed to become oppressors, and, handled without cadabra, Jessie Waterman have had some literary value of these—a woman who abruptly her entire past as a gang rapist becomes, herself, a psycho-rapist. A more literal change that should be attempted only by a writer with the sensibilities of Louis Stevenson.

Presented as it is, *A Sea-C* comes across vulgar, meretricious and pointless. Whatever its symbols may be up to, it never above the level of this character scene: her house about to collapse on her, her daughter swept to sea and presumably dead, Jessie the time and inclination for experimentation with Surfman on the floor.

As an introduction and part of the book, there stands a quotation from a zoological paper dealing with the social control of sex revealed in coral-reef fish. I would rather read about them.

*Ella Leffland's "Last Courtesies,"* which appeared in the July issue of this magazine, won a first prize in the O. Henry awards.



# SYSTEMS OF BELIEF

Jack Richardson

**Mind on Trial.** by Eugen  
Loebl. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich,  
\$9.95.

**Warning to the West,** by Alexander  
Solzhenitsyn. Farrar, Straus & Gi-  
rard, \$5.95.

**Underground Notes,** by Mihajlo  
Mihajlov. Sheed Andrews and Mc-  
Nelly, \$10.

**E**UGEN LOEBL, Mihajlo Mi-  
hajlov, and Alexander Sol-  
zhenitsyn are three wit-  
nesses to what occurs  
when, through chance or decision,  
an individual comes into conflict  
with the administrators of the Com-  
munist revolution. Solzhenitsyn is,  
of course, well known throughout  
the West, and his Gulag imprison-  
ment and subsequent exile have  
formed for many the paradigm of  
persecution in the Soviet Union. Mi-  
hajlov, who tells us that his writ-  
ings and public statements are  
censored by the courts, and that he is  
prevented by his government from  
traveling freely abroad, has achieved  
a certain reputation here and in Eu-  
rope as a syncretist of Christianity  
and socialism. Loebl was made the  
First Deputy Minister of Economics  
in Czechoslovakia after the Com-  
munist coup in 1948. In 1949, when  
the Soviets tightened their authority  
over his country, he was arrested  
and went through the by now fa-  
miliar process of interrogation, tor-  
ture, confession, trial, and prison by  
which Communists maintain, for no  
other but themselves, the appearance  
of legal order.

Each of these writers is concerned  
with making clear exactly what it  
means to be subjected to the caprices  
of a dictatorship. However, after  
reading their very different books—  
Solzhenitsyn's is a collection of  
speeches and interviews, Mihajlov's  
a gathering of moral and critical  
essays, Loebl's a recollection of the  
author's encounter with Communist  
reality—one begins to discern a uni-  
fying theme deeper than that of sim-  
ple victimization of individuals by  
the form of social dictatorship. It is

a theme sometimes explicit, some-  
times unconsciously assumed, but in  
both forms, it is, to my mind, what  
gives these works their historical and  
intellectual significance, and makes  
them form a comprehensive trilogy  
about the nature of European philo-  
sophical and political belief.

The theme I am referring to is  
that of ideological compulsion and  
its effects. By "ideological compul-  
sion" I mean the psychological, so-  
cial, and moral need to discover, in  
all areas of human affairs, a system  
that will sustain a consistent theo-  
retical structure whose laws become  
the logical aspects of a total truth.  
Such a need has tended to be part  
of the Central European philosophies  
which have, since Hegel, eschewed  
scientific and empirical methods and  
sought, through phenomenology,  
idealism, historical logic, and dozens  
of other modifications of traditional  
metaphysics to refute and overcome  
what George Lukacs called "the shal-  
lowness of positivist rationalism"  
and what he considered the social  
result of this shallowness, "bour-  
geois liberalism."

Now, to the mind seeking both  
spiritual and social totality in its  
view of the world, political ideology  
is much more than a loose collection  
of principles arbitrarily decided  
upon and subject to ad hoc inter-  
pretations into law. Such a mind  
sees democracy's self-evident truths  
as founded on nothing more solid  
than emotional appeal, and its  
method of implementing those truths  
as little more than a series of prag-  
matic improvisations devoid of logi-  
cal rigor or historical purpose.

Historically, total philosophies  
have treated contradictory evidence  
as either trivial empirical accidents  
or insufficiently understood data.  
However, when the recalcitrant evi-  
dence turns out to be one's self and  
the insufficiency of understanding  
beclouds the relationship between  
personal agony and the once trusted  
system that is causing the agony,  
then the believer in totality is faced  
with four difficult choices. He may

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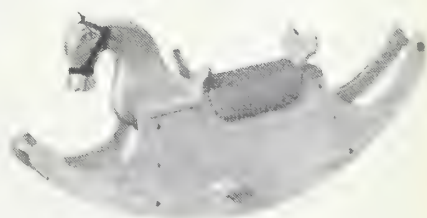
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accept his suffering as in some way deserved, and, although inscrutable to him, as having a purpose consistent with the ideals and ideological goals in which he believes. Or he may conclude that there is actually no overall pattern to human events, no all-encompassing truth that can withstand the argument of human fallibility. Again, he may decide that his predicament is a result of errors within the particular political framework that spawned it, and that truth of an absolute nature is still possible, as is the ideology that will translate it into the details of political and social activity. Finally, he may make what is for him the most difficult decision of all—namely, to renounce the totalist dogma of complete and consistent systems, and accept a more modest method of analysis that allows existence its areas of sanctuary from logical necessity.

To choose the first requires a selfless fanaticism. This very rarely accompanies the sort of intellectual egotism that would seek to comprehend the overall design of the world's history. The second solution entails a confrontation with what Marxist philosophers consider to be a sort of

Nietzschean irrationalism, a condition that to them means decadent aestheticism and the reduction of history to an inconsequent collection of individual moments of power. The third is the most inviting to the systematic mind, for it is the interpretation rather than the nature of reality that is called into question. One's sufferings can be made to serve a purpose if they lead to the discovery of the proper ideological setting for that reality.

The fourth solution, which involves the greatest amount of intellectual change and sacrifice, is by far the most difficult for the ideologist. Of the three men under discussion, only the economist Loebl, the once faithful and professional theoretician, has been able to see the danger in all systems of thought that try to achieve universal consistency. Although no philosopher, Loebl nevertheless gives us a perfect example of the seductive appeal contained in the intellectual method he learned to distrust. The following passage, taken from a section of his book that describes how he evolved, while in prison, a new concept of economics, forcefully and somewhat mockingly

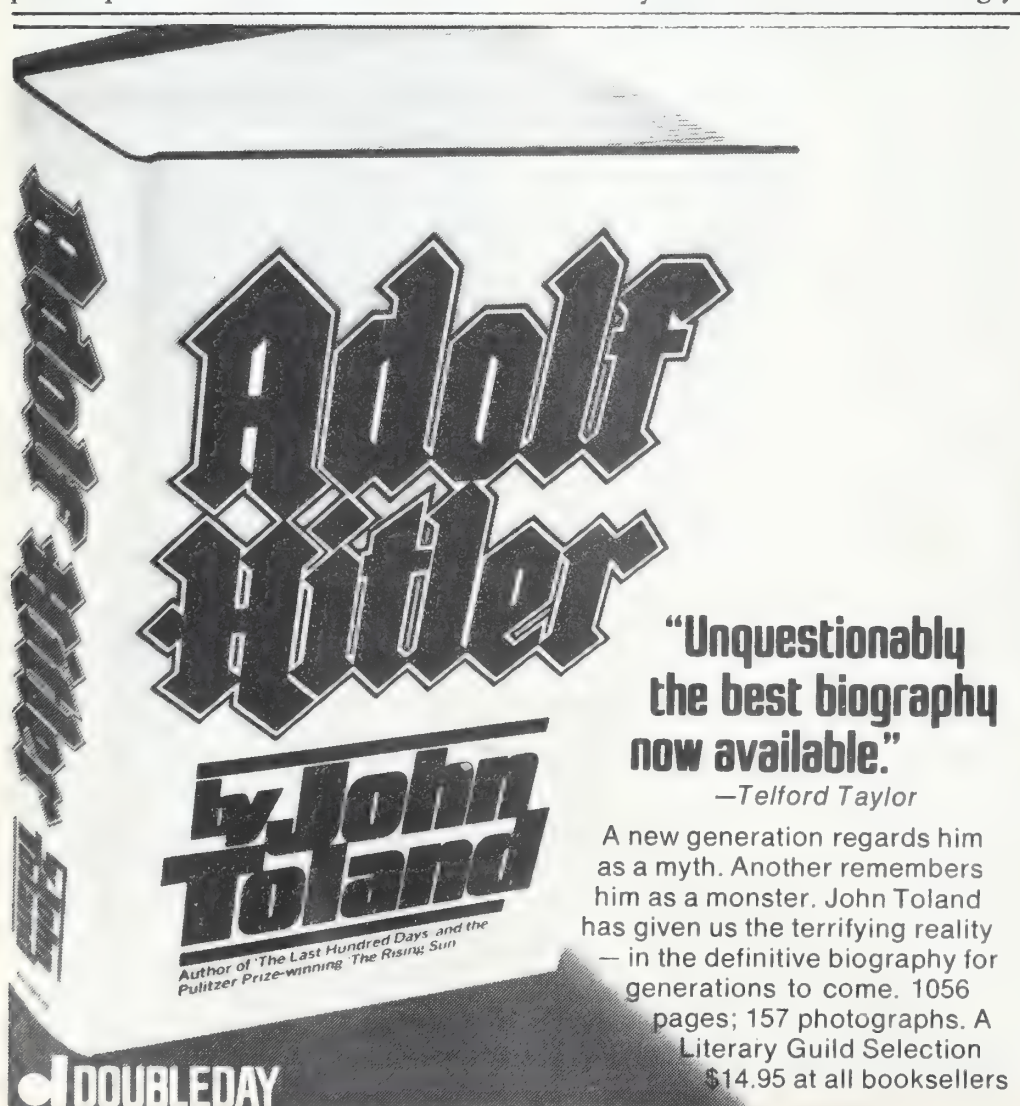
dramatizes the self-importance of the ideological mind.

*I began to think that my new economic theory would revolutionize the established way of thinking about economics and even the establishment itself. It is a difficult feeling to describe. It was not so much that I would publish the theory, but rather, that simply because I had changed my views and saw the world in a different light, the world itself had changed.*

Loebl, well aware that his mind was not by definition the equivalent of reality, continued to work on the substance of his theory, without inflating it into an absolute truth.

**T**HE SPEECHES in *Warning to the West* demonstrate that Solzhenitsyn is still in thrall to the mode of thinking Loebl overcame. For, although he attacks rigid systems of social order, he nevertheless cannot abide the lack of theoretical rigor, moral absolutes, and spiritual mission that he finds in our democracy. He wishes to ideologize it, not through the constricting logic or scientific methods of pure rationalism—a mode of thought he considers the cause of both the totalitarian party line and the democratic indulgence in permissive quibbling—but rather through an infusion of moral confidence. Good and evil are to be reclaimed from the positivist limbo to which they had been relegated by a smug and soulless intelligence, and then freedom and tyranny will again be clear, distinct ideas, set against a background of moral reality. The effect of the new spiritual cohesiveness that Solzhenitsyn envisions is implied quite clearly in the following excerpt from a speech he delivered to members of the AFL-CIO in Washington:

*I would like to call upon America to be more careful with its trust to prevent those pundits who are attempting to establish fine degrees of justice and even finer legal shades of equality (some because of their distorted outlook, others because of short-sightedness, still others out of self-interest) — to prevent them from using the struggle for peace and for social justice to lead you down a false road.*



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**by John Toland**

Author of 'The Last Hundred Days' and the Pulitzer Prize-winning 'The Rising Sun'

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Rarely has one sentence contained so many concepts antithetical to democratic principles. When one knows the nature of good and evil, apparently, legal distinctions become superfluous, arguments are met by slander and epithets, and further deviations from the true road are to be "prevented." Prevented! This from the man whose literary reputation is based as much on his battles against censorship as on the books he has written. It would be unkind to see in such intellectual vulgarity anything more than a comical simplification of systematic philosophy. But the ideals of structured and comprehensive certainty are common to both, and it is well to know that Solzhenitsyn's crudities have complex and respectable origins.

If Mihajlov offends less than Solzhenitsyn, it is because he is something of an amiable curiosity. While he sees danger in the ideological concept of society, and perceives the dictatorial presumptions behind Solzhenitsyn's pronouncements, he nevertheless cannot tolerate an existence guided by nothing but the negative capability taught by positivism. Therefore, Mihajlov presents for the enlightenment of the West a theoretical return to religion. When he says that he intends something different from those authoritarian religions that caused cultural hatreds, factional wars, and inquisitions of heterodox minds, it is hard to know what to marvel at more, Mihajlov's indifference to history or his ignorance of human nature.

Finally, something should be said about the "positivism" and "rationalism" that are often disdainfully referred to in these books. These terms, frequently used as though they are interchangeable by Continental philosophers, stand for two large, different, and completely subdivided areas of thought. That Kant and Voltaire have been linked under rationalism, while positivism includes philosophers from Comte to A. J. Ayer, who have nothing but disagreement in common, should indicate that any critical reference to these schools of philosophy must be accompanied by precise qualifications or else be considered as nothing more than a rhetorical flourish, the *Carthago delenda est* of philosophical harangues. However, two relevant things may be safely said about these



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traditions of thought. First, it is from the rationalist school that democracy, using the authority of man's reason, drew its principles. Second, it is the restraints of positivism that permeate the framework of our constitution, so that its assumptions remain open to amendment and interpretation. Positivism, in its modern forms, far from treating existence in a shallow manner, grants it a mys-

tery and complexity beyond systematic reasoning, and thereby permits it an emotional and imaginative freedom that is reflected in political form by democratic diversity. Those who can neither accept nor refute this form of self-critical reasoning, and must impose a single purpose on reality, are the real traducers of life. That democracy claims no heritage of historical dialectic for its presence,

and no system of necessity for its moral principles, may make it seem to a mind like Solzhenitsyn's an untidy and inefficient social form. But it is just this untidiness and inefficiency that bind democracy to human existence, and keep it from becoming another ideology in disguise. □

*Jack Richardson is the drama critic of Commentary.*

## BOOKS IN BRIEF: FIVE NOVELS

by Thomas R. Edwards

**Bear**, by Marian Engel. Atheneum, \$6.95.

**M**ARIAN ENGEL'S *Bear* is an extraordinary short novel about animals, love, the condition of women, Canada, and the pathos of lost history. Its heroine, Lou, spends a long summer in northern Ontario, now imperiled by snowmobiles and oversized outboards. Her task is to catalogue the contents of a remote old house recently donated to the historical institute she works for, but her purposes go deeper. She seeks to understand her own childhood in the region, her humiliating loves for inadequate men, the purposes and feelings of the Cary family, who built this outpost of British culture in an alien place, and her own strange obsession, which becomes an explicitly sexual passion, for the seedy old bear she finds on the premises, last of a line of such Byronic pets begun by the first Colonel Cary.

Engel's sober, explanatory style allows significance to emerge gradually and uninsistently. Lou's intrusion, with the bear, into a natural otherness that's both perilous and enlivening reenacts the Romanticism of those who, like the Carys, have sought to live in the wilderness on their own, imported terms. And her heroic failure, like theirs, brings self-acceptance and the will to continue, although not exactly as before.

Marian Engel is often called one of Canada's best younger writers, but such praise seems almost impertinent. Wherever it came from, *Bear* would be a small and quiet masterpiece. □

**The Woman Warrior**, by Maxine Hong Kingston. Alfred A. Knopf, \$7.95.

**T**he *Woman Warrior* tells of a young Chinese-American woman in conflict with an ancestry that resists assimilation into a flawed but necessary America. For women like her own mother and aunts, America is no liberation, since it adds to traditional Chinese repression of women the fear of foreigners who seem malevolent "ghosts," the anxieties of the illegal immigrant, the continual threat of madness.

Maxine Hong Kingston's heroine makes the break into new ways: "I learned to think that mysteries are for explanation. I enjoy the simplicity. Concrete pours out of my mouth to cover the forests with freeways and sidewalks. Give me plastics, periodical tables, t.v. dinners." Yet such newness is heavy with ironies, and she keeps trying to understand the heritage she can't reject decisively.

It's a familiar story, perhaps, and its serious purposes are occasionally betrayed by gratuitous ethnic comedy, but *The Woman Warrior* is redeemed by Kingston's tough, intelligent, eloquent writing about a fascinating collision of cultures. □

**Sombrero Fallout: A Japanese Novel**, by Richard Brautigan. Simon and Schuster, \$6.95.

**I**N RICHARD BRAUTIGAN'S *Sombrero Fallout*, "a very well-known American humorist" tries to write about a small town's eruption into bloody riot when a weird hat falls from the sky.

Then that story is discarded (it, however, keeps writing itself in the wastebasket) as he turns to tender reminiscences of his lost Japanese girlfriend and anxieties about food and literary reputation. As a Barthelme-like exercise in discontinuous modes, lyrical, topical, and confessional, the book is amusing but somehow self-cancelling. The parable about mindless public violence is too harmlessly droll, the love story too sentimental, the portrait of the artist too routinely self-loathing. Remembering Brautigan's *Trout Fishing in America*, I would be glad to like *Sombrero Fallout* better, but his charm seems to be increasingly calculated. □

**Flight to Canada**, by Ishmael Reed. Random House, \$6.95.

**T**WO FICTIONISTS of the antebellum South preside over *Flight to Canada*, a fantasia on black emancipation. To be sure, Ishmael Reed's Harriet Beecher Stowe is a pushy plagiarist with grave sexual hangups, and his Edgar Allan Poe recalls the Roger Corman-Vincent Price movies more than the original tales. But then Reed's Civil War America is a curious place itself, where carriages and crinolines mix with jet planes and Band-Aids, and Lincoln's assassination is covered by TV.

Reed plays his game of anachronism as both surreal comedy and serious reimagining of history. Lincoln appears as an LBJ type whose yokelisms mask immense worldliness. ("Gilded Age ding-dong if there ever was... I feel like a minstrel," he can observe of the villainous Arthur Swille, slave owner and multinational



# CHINESE BOXES



Susan Meiselas

tycoon, from whom he's just finagled a loan. Swille himself neatly combines a "period" decadence—sado-masochism, Tennysonian melancholy, incestuous necrophilia—and a more familiar corruption ("Look, Lee, if you don't get those men off my property I'm going to create an energy crisis"). The hero, the runaway slave-poet Raven Quickskill, blurs into a modern black activist on the run, a war resister making for Canada, and an outlaw artist like Ishmael Reed.

*Flight to Canada* is continuously funny and provocative, but it lacks the imaginative alchemy that made Reed's *Mumbo Jumbo* such an exhilarating antihistory. □

**The Widow's Children**, by Paula Fox. E. P. Dutton, \$8.95.

**T**O CALL Paula Fox a heartless writer isn't simply to deplore *The Widow's Children*. Her remarkable alertness to human weakness enables her to portray an unpleasant family with the convincing clarity of a brilliantly unflattering photograph.

Hispano-Cuban émigrés making do in New York, the Maldonadas are ill-gifted ones indeed—Carlos, a failed music critic and pederast; Eugenio, a reclusive travel agent who specializes in rich old ladies; and especially the bitchy, secretive, self-centered, destructive Laura, who has driven two husbands into alcoholism and now bullies the unwanted daughter she's neglected since birth. Fox's men are invariably weak and effeminate; her women, though more various, are all terribly closed off from generosity and sympathy. Though they plead social or personal causes for their plights—they lost their wealth without having been trained to make their own way, they were somehow damaged by the self-martyred mother whose death is the story's occasion—nothing really accounts for their awfulness except perhaps the author's bleak sense of human nature.

On the stage, where such as Pinter have taught us not to look for explanation or "larger meanings," *The Widow's Children* could be shattering. As a novel it leaves me puzzled and oddly resentful. □

Thomas R. Edwards teaches English at Rutgers.

The Democrats watch the Democrats watching themselves  
by Frank Mankiewicz and Joel Swerdlow

**O**N THE THIRD night of the Democratic Convention, while the balloting was proceeding to its inevitable conclusion, network cameras were turned on Jimmy Carter's hotel suite. Thus viewers across the country could see the candidate in his hotel room. What was he doing? Just what you would expect—he was watching television. And what did he see? He saw Jimmy Carter in his hotel room, watching Jimmy Carter in his . . .

It was a nice illustration of one of Zeno's paradoxes, the one represented on the package of Quaker Oats. There, a sort of Quaker is looking at a package of Quaker Oats, which has on it a Quaker looking at a smaller package, which has a tiny Quaker looking at a dot, which we imagine is a Quaker Oats package. Television has put us all back in the barbershop mirrors—one customer, but an infinity of illusion.

It is all television. A national convention now is no more than a skillfully produced pilot. It runs for four nights—a "four-parter" as *Variety* would call it—and, with adequate

audience response, will last not for 39 weeks but for 208, with an option to renew. Four years ago a high-violence shoot-'em-up won the nod, only to be cancelled in mid-season; now the Democrats are gambling that the country is ready for more of *The Waltons*.

There is no attempt anymore to suggest that a convention is the kind of spectacle which, like a World Series, would be put on even if there were no television. The convenience of the participants is obviously less important than that of the media. Many of the delegates had no view of the podium because of the giant platform for the cameras, but they could mill about if they wanted to see who was speaking; very few did. The most visible artifacts in the hall were the network booths, and the managers of the convention had placed the key delegations (Georgia, New York, California) and the key delegates (Richard J. Daley) in locations that were easily accessible to reporters and cameras.

Time is everything at a convention. What is most important is not simply prime time but *live* prime time, and that is in much shorter supply than ordinary prime time. Prime time, for the taped entertainment programs, runs from 8:00 to 11:00 P.M. everywhere. But to catch those

Frank Mankiewicz, a Washington journalist, and Joel Swerdlow, a social scientist, are at work on *Remote Control*, a book about the effect of television on American life.



hours *live* is another matter. Eight o'clock in the evening is prime in the East, but only five o'clock in California, and by eight on the Coast it's already eleven in New York. So live prime has to be accommodated roughly between 9:30 and 11:00 P.M., EST, or important markets will be lost. This explains why, at the Democratic convention, we got, occasionally, that hoariest of fillers, "an interlude of recorded music." Nothing in the rules of the convention, or in Robert's Rules of Order, permits a postponement in the order of business. But the Democrats' order of business often included long stretches of Peter Duchin and his orchestra. The commentators told us the music was played so that the delegates could have time to go out for a snack, but it was really used so the Southern Californians in the television audience could find their freeway off-ramp, and get home in time to flip the "on" switch.

Why were the Carter forces on the floor so anxious to defeat a seemingly innocuous proposal for one hour of debate on three issues—any issues—to be selected by straw vote of the delegates? Again, time provides the answer. The debate might have been instructive, although there is no reason to think the delegates would have paid any more attention to speeches about abortion, defense spending, or homosexual rights than they would—and did—to any other speeches. But those who wanted the debate, and those who didn't, knew that television could make that debate the most vivid portion of the whole convention, and once again let the bizarre fringe stand for the whole.

So it was surprising that the correspondents were surprised when the Carter forces also turned out to defeat a proposal that would restore to 10 percent the number of members of a committee who could bring a minority report to the floor. If there was one act between 1972 and 1976 which turned the convention into the "dull" show it was, as opposed to the "exciting" show of 1972, it was the change in the rules that required approval by at least 25 percent of the committee members for a dissenting plank to be brought to the floor for debate. That was an action which said, loudly, "We're going to run our own television program for four days, and not

let the networks' news judgments tell the people who we are," but the targets—the networks—never noticed it, and only once during the convention was this point discussed. But all the order, all the "love," all the "dullness," in short, the triumph of the Democrats, stemmed directly from that procedural decision. Bob Strauss might not be thinking about his epitaph yet, but a good suggestion would be "He Kept Homosexual Marriage off the Floor."

**S**TRAUSS, AS A matter of fact, did make one mistake, and it led to an old-fashioned scene at the convention, in which television merely recorded the delegates acting "naturally," rather than as actors in a television pilot film. When George Wallace spoke on Tuesday night, a serious miscalculation had been made. His wheelchair could not be placed close enough to the microphone, with the result that his speech was almost inaudible in the Garden. As penance, Strauss arranged for the chairman of the Alabama delegation, Robert T. Wilson, to have "a few minutes" at the start of the balloting the next night to make some remarks honoring Wallace. It would have been a nice moment, because Wilson also planned then to announce that Governor Wallace wanted all his delegates to vote for Jimmy Carter. Unfortunately, Strauss neglected to tell the delegates about his arrangement with Alabama, and, more important, he forgot to tell the anchor booths.

When the roll call began, Alabama was called first, and Wilson began: "We love George Wallace and we represent tens of millions of people who have worked and voted for him all across the country. George Wallace has announced that he wants his name withdrawn. . . ." Unfortunately, Wilson's accent, pure nasal Alabaman, and his closeness to the microphone made him unintelligible to the delegates. All they could hear was the occasional "Wallace," and, unaware that Strauss had given him extra time, they began to boo and catcall, drowning out Wilson.

So Wallace—who had never supported a Democratic nominee and had done his best to rip the party apart since 1964, made a gracious exit, only to be treated with the hos-

tility he had earned during the years when he didn't care if the cameras were on. It was a moment of high drama, but the networks missed its significance, even on the following night when Strauss made a belated, if confused, apology. Nobody was listening then, either.

The Democrats' use of film at a filmed convention made the networks mad. When it first appeared that the Democrats would introduce their keynote speakers with film and turn out the lights in the hall while they did so, John Chancellor complained. One cannot see Chancellor at a convention without remembering the great moment at San Francisco in 1964 when he was *arrested* on the floor in the middle of a commentary, and disappeared, a deputy sheriff on his arm, down a tunnel with the words, "This is John Chancellor, NBC News, somewhere in custody." But in 1976 in New York, he was an anchorman, and a spokesman for journalism. He complained about the film, and told his audience that the network newsmen were supposed to be in the business of reporting what they think is important, not what politicians tell them to show. It almost sounded as if a Nazi gymkhana were about to unfold.

The film was merely some confusing filmed badinage of some of Mr. Dooley's attacks on Ray-phublicans, starring Ed Asner. NBC surely could have been ready for this, and switched outside the hall—perhaps to cover the prostitutes or the demonstrating homosexuals outside the Garden. But some impulse, perhaps one that said people would switch to another network, kept NBC right on the film.

The films introducing John Glenn and Barbara Jordan were instructive and unquestionably the best way to introduce them. Tears came to the eyes when Mercury Control said again, "God be with you, John, and when Miss Jordan told the House impeachment inquiry that she was determined to uphold this Constitution which now, at last, includes her. No accident, clearly, that both of these moving events had been originally staged for television. No wonder Strauss turned out the lights.

If Senator Glenn was still in the running Monday night, he probably dealt himself a mortal blow by his keynote speech. As such things g



it was somewhere between a C and a B, but the cameras revealed clearly that the delegates were bored by it. No one listened, or even tried to listen. No one expected John Glenn to give 'em hell, but he didn't even give 'em heck.

But the grand use of film came on Thursday, the night for the acceptance speech. After a stirring speech by Mondale, the lights went off again and the *Carter* film began. It lasted for fifteen minutes, and it was wonderful—quick, entertaining and modern. A *Sesame Street* collage of cartoons, quotations, and peanut fields. It had opponents, victories, defeats, and caricatures. It even had Walter Cronkite and a bouncing peanut. The *New York Times* quoted Carter's media maven, Jerry Rafshoon, as explaining: "You want to know why we made the film? We made it because it was the only chance we will ever have for a fifteen-minute commercial on all three networks." Only ingrained Southern restraint must have kept him from adding, "In prime time. Free."

No sooner did the film end (again, no time for "instant analysis") than the candidate appeared, not from behind the podium as originally planned, but through the crowd on the floor, for all the world like Muhammad Ali approaching the ring for a closed circuit match in Manila or Zaire. Good visuals, good drama.

The networks which covered the convention, as they say, "gavel to gavel," had a problem. In 1972 the Republican gathering was even more cut and dried, but that meant the correspondents could concentrate on the spectacle, and compare it with the tumultuous Democratic proceedings. They could talk comfortably about the films, the balloons, the bogus "young people" screeching "Four more years!" and even give the Nixon people marks for organizing a sort of "Up With People" stage show. Of course, no one would think of asking Maurice Stans just why he fought so hard *not* to testify under oath to the Watergate grand jury, and the reporting of Watergate was generally suspended during the week of revelry—but then, who would ask about hereditary blood disease at the gay wedding party of a Bourbon princess?

But the 1976 Democrats were, after all, Democrats, and the networks

had put millions of dollars and a lot of portentousness into covering the primaries and creating a mood of conflict. It was too hard to shift those gears, so the network correspondents, while certifying the lack of a contest and the mood of unity from time to time, spent the idle moments looking for trouble. But the unity was real. The rebels of 1972 had become the county leaders, state chairmen, and Congressmen of 1976. The eight imported Carter floor leaders were all 1972 McGovernites. The battles had largely been won, and hardly anyone was disposed to start new ones.

This left the networks with a dilemma. Either NBC and CBS would abandon "gavel to gavel" and join ABC in short highlights, thus conceding that the intensive pre-convention coverage had been excessive, or they would stay with saturation coverage. To their credit, they chose the latter, thus certifying the process as extremely important. Americans understand that only Important Events can cause the preemption of regular programming.

But, once the decision was made to go all the way, another dilemma arose. Should what was happening be explained—that is to say, should the platform be analyzed, or the full and lasting impact of the post-1968 reform rules be detailed? But discussion of all this would have meant a few hours of serious stuff, and surely lower ratings.

So we got a fair amount of silliness. A lot of attention to Jerry Brown, questions like "Is this something you wanted very much?" asked of Joan Mondale, and long interviews with Carter's mother, Miss Lillian (in one memorable session with Walter Cronkite, she verified a lot of American priorities by kissing an autographed photo of Joe Namath). Much was made of the presence of Richard J. Daley, contrasted with his absence four years before, but some serious analysis would have told the viewers that his influence—precisely because of his absence—was greater in 1972.

One splendid moment went unremarked. At one of the few real events of the convention—unstaged and unrehearsed—Jimmy Carter met the press at 10:00 A.M. on Thursday to announce his choice for Vice-President. He spoke of Walter Mondale,

and then the cameras picked up the Mondales leaving their hotel to join the Carters. After a few minutes, while Carter was taking questions from the reporters, word was given him that the Mondales had reached the lobby; Rosalynn Carter slipped out to greet them. Carter himself then asked that there be no more questions until Mondale had reached the podium, but the correspondents, tough uncompromising post-Watergate fellows that they are, kept on trying. So Carter *left the podium* and walked to the back of the room to meet Mondale. The cameras couldn't catch it because the crowd was in the way; few seemed to realize what was happening—a candidate for President had abandoned three network cameras, live, in order to show ordinary courtesy to his new running mate. Carter then escorted Mondale to the podium and stepped into the background. It was a revealing moment, caught by the camera but unexplained and unremarked by the commentators.

The television cameras can make or break a speech, just by showing the right—or wrong—reaction. The sight of rapt or hand-clapping spectators conveys quite a different impression from seeing them milling about. There is, as well, a consistency in the choice of which individuals to use for these reaction shots. Thus, when Barbara Jordan spoke, most of the reactions were from blacks, and, where possible, black women. The cameras would also go to blacks if a speaker began to talk about "social justice." If Israel was under discussion, the screen would show Jews, identified by their yarmulkes or by the fact that they were Senator Ribicoff. If religion generally was involved—as at an invocation—Father Robert Drinan, the Massachusetts priest-Congressman, was usually the camera target. And whenever a speaker would invoke the name of President Kennedy, the cameras would swing over to the VIP seats and a candid shot of Mrs. Onassis.

The system broke down only once, in the best moment of the week. At the end of one of the sessions, Chairman Strauss turned the microphone over to a rabbi for the benediction.

Over the open mike, Strauss was heard to say, "Don't worry, they're not listening." The rabbi replied, "Neither does *my* congregation." □



# VERSE

## MONARCHS IN THE FIELD

by Annie Dillard

*"To conduct what was in fact a field experiment the doctor first went South, and he ate a number of monarchs in the field."*

### Runnymede

A monarch in the field, stripped,  
rapt, in a weave of nettles, thistle-  
down, round-shouldered, signing  
his frail I do. A gap in the hillocks  
slams. Brittany, the archbishop, the Earl  
of Pembroke work their jaws.

*"The monarch butterfly, Dr. Urquhart learned,  
has no more flavor than dry toast."*

### Flavor

Compared to, say, the wood nymph  
or the Colorado hairstreak?  
We sample flavors, scatter husks like wings,  
downwind and loosely in meadows.

### Dry toast

will do in a pinch for tea, you know,  
or a fluttering tray for shut-ins.

*Grasp the thorax through the net. Exert  
an even LIGHT pressure to paralyze, not kill.*

### The Hobbyist

Doesn't mean a thing.  
Gold dust in cigar boxes, the scent  
of cinnamon, lemon, cedar.  
Only an amateur finds later  
legs running beside their pins.

*"Normally a diurnal creature, like other butterflies,  
[the painted lady] suddenly adopts the nocturnal flying  
habits of moths and flutters through darkness  
on its journey across the Mediterranean Sea."*

### The Pins

Fishermen set their nets  
to a rustle they sense  
on only their lips. Poor  
Bruno, crest-fallen, jumps,  
and the waters slam. Those other  
Mediterranean painted ladies  
never meant to kill;  
they can only flutter and beat  
and show what's there to be seen.

*"The Netsilik Eskimos also know a third land of the dead,  
'the land of the crest-fallen,' just below the crust  
of the earth. Unskillful hunters and women whose tattooing  
has been badly done sit there, chin on breast, now and then  
snapping dully at the butterflies which are their only food."*

### Desserts

And the tattoo artist himself? Eating flensed  
whale tail and ptarmigan on some ever-  
lighted shore, I suppose, harmlessly.  
It's our rights we want, the length  
of our arms plus net. Can't  
open our mouths sans taking a tiny  
chomp. Dear crest-fallen, I'm sorry.  
Bang one time on the roof; we'll toss  
you chrysalids like sprouts. Trim  
your wick, King John: it's only  
a piece of parchment, as they say.

*"'Life's greatest danger'—said an old Iglulik shaman—  
'lies in the fact that man's food consists  
entirely of souls.'"*



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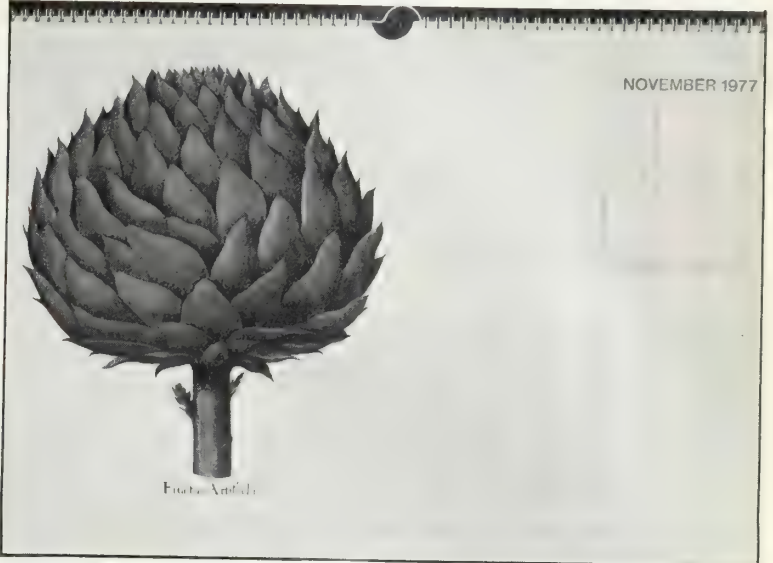
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## Solution to the September Puzzle

### Notes for "News Clippings"

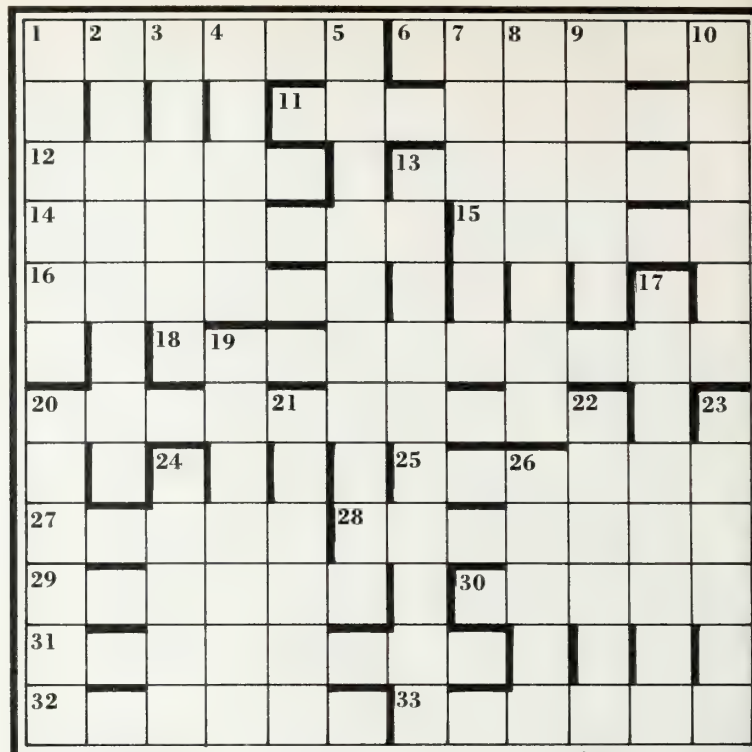
Across: 8. A.(rub)A.; in-tre(reversal); 9. carol-in-a; Co.-median; 10. Poe-n(afia); hang (pun); 11. a-yes; item (anagram); 12. clam (two meanings); furs (homonym, firs); 13. ou(se[l])ls; M-Urals; 14. newcomer (anagram of "men-ower"); ex-P.L.O.-d(ies); 19. ran-sacks; art(reversal)-verse; 20. yodelers ("pro-lucers of l'il ol' lady who sound"). Down: 1. anagram of "recant mass"; anagram of "in city oad"; 2. iron-Y.; anagram of "a cent"; 3. sex-Rex(reversal); 4. Tr(o)y I-be-X; 5. do(reversal)-I.O.U.'s; tr(ia)ls; 6. E-man-a-set(reversal); anagram of "runs ven"; 7. seam-stress ("sewer"); r.(steaming-anagram)r.; 12. anagram of "Cos-l(l)'s"; floral (free "for-all"); 15. p-ram; wind (two meanings); 16. case (two meanings); live (two meanings); 17. dart (two meanings); anagram of "came"; 18. Ma-O; (p)are(nt).



# PUZZLE

## PLAYFAIR SQUARE

by Richard Maltby, Jr. (with acknowledgments to Stephen Sondheim)



**This month's instructions:** In a Playfair code square, a key-word of any length, in which no letter recurs is arbitrarily chosen and written down, followed by the rest of the alphabet in order (I and J counting as the same letter) so as to make a 5x5 square.

B A N K R  
U P T C Y  
D E F G H  
I L M O Q  
S V W X Z

In this example, the word BANKRUPTCY is the key-word. To encode a word, one would first split it into pairs of letters, e.g.: RE VE RS ED. The pair RE becomes AH, using opposite corners of the rectangle of letters. (Note that ER would not be AH but HA.) RS becomes

BZ. To encode two letters in the same row (or column), one would use the letters immediately to the right of (or below) each. For last letters of a row or column, use the first. Thus ED would become FE and VE would become AL. Consequently, REVERSED would be encoded as AHALBZFE.

Answers to the four clues in italics are to be inserted in the diagram in their encoded forms, using a Playfair square of which the key word has to be discovered. By solving these clues and comparing the answers with the coded forms which will take shape in the diagram as regular answers are inserted, equations will result which will enable the solver to discover, by logical deduction, the key word and to complete the puzzle.

Clue answers include one proper name, four foreign words that have entered the language, and one archaic but not uncommon word (29A). As always, repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 107.

### CLUES

#### ACROSS

1. *Not quite antique, but remarkably old and charming* (6)
6. Give, to a prosecutor, gun boats? (6)
11. The adder sprung, penetrating the eye (8)
12. Fancied being heard in a boat (5)
13. I am unfortunately returning the meat (6)

14. Flop back, if holding a decoy (7)
15. Mafia chief, third in line—big chicken (5)
16. Passive about sign of victory in reverse (6)
18. Compelling type producing aggregate income (10)
20. Let outside, soldier has me organized into groups (10)
25. It's more expensive going west during revolutionary period (6)
27. Barges into the Gestapo place, bossy (5)
28. Quiet one, extremely tremulous (7)
29. Resemble, perhaps (6)
30. Permission to be left with a hangover? (5)
31. Relents, redesigning about 100 desks (7)
32. Take a helping of grits, i.e.—stay the rest of the afternoon (6)
33. *Better than just prettier* (6)

### DOWN

1. It's certainly something to be enmeshed in an unhappy affair (6)
2. "Bloom in love"—thin upsetting florid (8)
3. Royal one, five, is captivated by the flourish (6)
4. Pianist in scarlet (5)
5. It tells you the way to employ more than once a drink (10)
7. Responds by opening up crates (6)
8. Sail billowing in west, e.g., gives feeling of uneasiness (7)
9. Dramatize *Modern Times* . . . to a point (5)
10. *It covers some necks found in shackles* (6)
13. Used what's on some faces to mark time (6-4)
17. Mars: travel in space (8)
19. They're not very bright in returning taunts (7)
20. *Steamship employee recovered from stroke* (6)
21. Arm is required to keep half-hidden inside (6)
22. Potentially sadder feelings? (6)
23. Hairdressers' helpers that can't hold their liquor become doctors (6)
24. Bad cold on the end of the nose is . . . organically sweet (5)
26. A short upright turn away (5)

### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to News Clippings, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by October 8. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year

subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the November issue. Winners' names will be printed in the December issue. Winners of the August puzzle, "Amusement Park," are Sally Drillick, Brooklyn, New York; James Pate, Birmingham, Alabama; and Stanley Dick, Cambridge, Mass.



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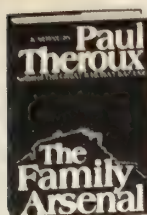
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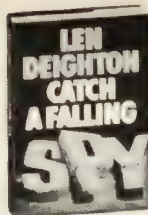
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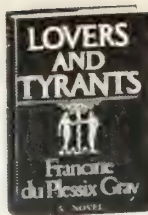
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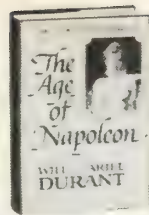
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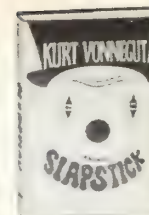
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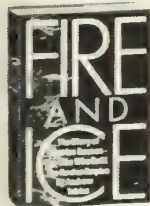
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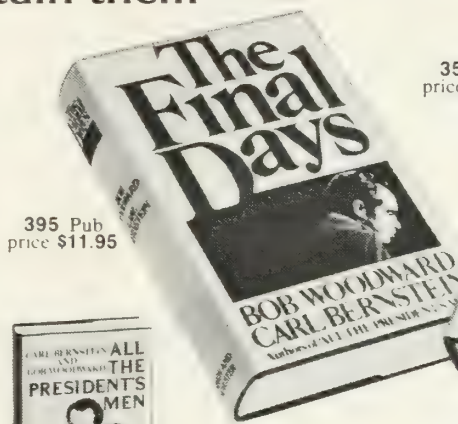
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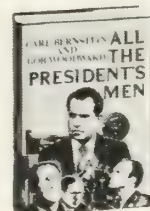
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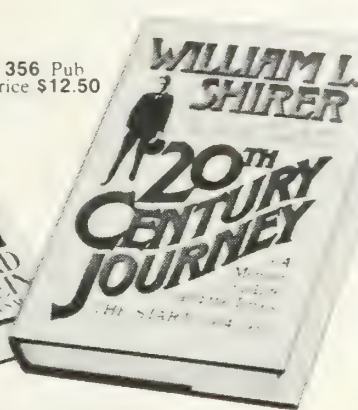
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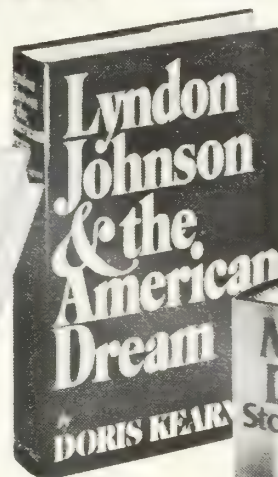
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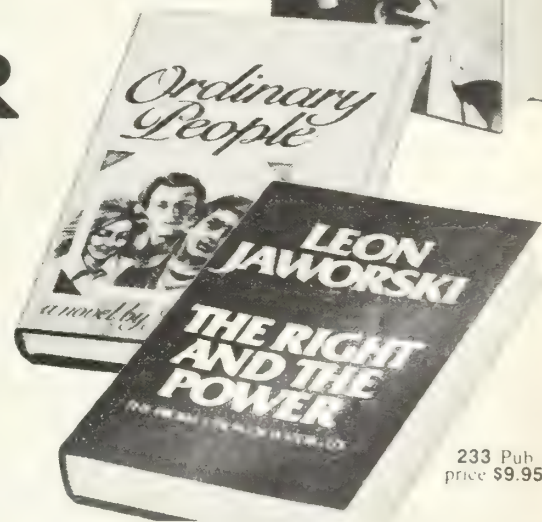
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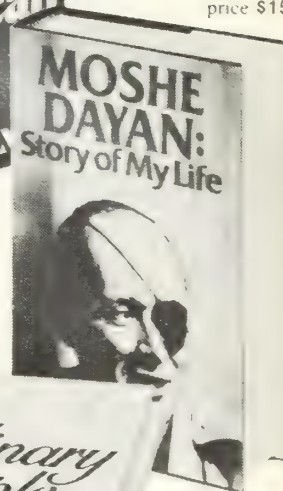
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# LETTERS

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## Literature v. literacy

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In his piece "The Higher Illiteracy" [September], Gene Lyons says, "Except for one man who wrote a book on Alexander Pope, everyone who hired on in 1969 at the University of Massachusetts either has been fired or left on his own account." Will *Harper's* print the less sensational truth?

In 1969 we hired twelve full-time and five part-time teachers. Of the five part-time persons, three are still employed here: one in rhetoric (freshman writing), one in Afro-American studies (full-time), and one in English (full-time). The last specializes in teaching writing, and is the author of a distinguished text.

Of the twelve full-time persons, one was a visitor, one resigned in 1971 and another in '72, one was not reappointed after '73, and one became chairman of our Afro-American Studies Department. Five are now tenured in English. Their fields are Afro-American literature, creative writing: fiction (two persons), Old English, and eighteenth-century literature. (I have to confess that all five do indeed have distinguished publishing records.)

Of the remaining two persons, one was not recommended for tenure. The other was strongly recommended for tenure by this department but denied at another level. (Both these persons are excellent teachers and, in my view, a loss.)

Out of the seventeen persons, then, nine are still at the University of Massachusetts. Only one person of the remaining eight was denied tenure—and that *not* for being a Republican or for not vigiling against the Vietnam war on the Amherst town common!

Lyons says that the University of Texas English department "voted down by a heavy margin a proposal that would have required all full-

time faculty members to teach one section of freshman composition every one-and-a-half years." It may be of interest that we at the University of Massachusetts have passed by a heavy margin (a ratio greater than 4 to 1) the following resolution: "It is the policy of the Department of English that all full-time members be prepared to teach one course in writing each academic year if such service is needed in making up an equitable schedule."

This English department has also been working with area high schools and community colleges to improve the level of writing instruction in the Commonwealth. Members of the department have led writing-curriculum-development workshops in Boston, Holyoke, Springfield, Greenfield, and elsewhere. We have worked at the City College of New York Writing Center, given talks on the teaching of writing, published books and articles on the teaching of writing.

DAVID R. CLARK

Chairman  
Department of English  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, Mass.

Since Alexander Pope and I have landed an unlikely cameo appearance together in Gene Lyons's wide-screen vision of the American English department, and since the other fellow has stopped responding to charges, I would like to question several of the article's positions. The most general one is that English professors at state universities are primarily to blame for the apparent decline of writing skills among high-school graduates. Another is that if these same university teachers stopped bothering so much about old books, then new students would write better essays. Or that teachers prepared and usually hired to give instruction in literature, criticism, and cultural history are derelict not only in failing to spend most of their

time teaching freshman composition but also in failing to regard it as the best social use of their talents and training.

Few people would ignore the fact that state universities are bound to spend increasingly more time and money on teaching basic and remedial writing; faculty openings have in fact reflected this pattern for several years. But it does not seem to make much logical or utilitarian sense to argue that, say, a mathematician should be held responsible for the fact that a student can enter college without being mathematically "literate" and that he or she should therefore devoutly wish to teach elementary algebra—and should assume that no one with less advanced training could do it as well. An unsensational but obvious reason for assigning more teaching assistants than professors to freshman composition courses is that the professor is not likely to know much more about teaching writing skills than the qualified second- or third-year graduate student but is likely to know more about Elizabethan theater, for example, American regionalism, or Victorian politics.

How far the society is able and willing to support the study of literature and the larger history of thought and expression is always a serious and open question. So, too, is the question of how and where the teaching of literacy apart from literature can best be conducted. Neither question gains much in clarity by their shotgun marriage or by being dragged along in the zigzag pursuit of a profession which (depending on whether one looks to page 36 or page 38 of Mr. Lyons's account) spends too little time doing "research" and produces far too much of it.

JOHN E. SITTER

Associate Professor  
Department of English  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, Mass.



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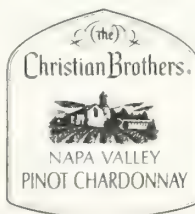
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## LETTERS

Of course Gene Lyons is right. Too many professors of English are so concerned with literature that they give little or no attention to the teaching of writing. But it seems funny that Mr. Lyons doesn't—or anyway didn't—practice what he preaches.

During the period 1969-72, when Lyons was evidently here at the University of Massachusetts, I was director of freshman English at this institution and was extremely occupied. I was organizing new programs in writing for freshmen, I was conducting a graduate course to help our graduate assistants become better teachers, and I was gratefully accepting what help I could get from my literary colleagues who expressed some interest in composition. But where was Lyons? Too busy teaching literature? If Lyons made any contribution whatever to our freshman English enterprise during that period, I don't know what it was. To tell the truth, I can't even remember the man's face. I don't suppose he remembers mine either, but, if he does, I hope it haunts him.

Where was he, back then when I needed him?

WALKER GIBSON

Professor of English  
University of Massachusetts  
Amherst, Mass.

"The Higher Illiteracy" moved me to cheers! I consider myself fortunate to hold a position as a writing teacher. For ten years I have witnessed the abysmal attitude toward my profession by those who should know better—English faculties. My experience in those years documents Mr. Lyons's observations: teaching assistants *do* receive slave wages. Senior faculty members *do* shudder at the thought of teaching writing classes. Empty, tired literature courses *are* endlessly retaught to graduate students destined to go jobless. And enormous numbers of students *do* hunger for instruction in basic writing skills.

I would, however, take issue with Mr. Lyons's parenthetical declaration that "any literate person, with some training, ought to be able to [teach writing]." My experience as a graduate student showed me that many senior faculty members are in fact *not* teachers at all: schooled for research themselves, they cannot teach even their own specialties adequate-

ly. They cannot be turned into effective teachers in a discipline for which their lack of interest amounts to distaste.

To begin to correct the problem, I suggest that our large universities hire teachers of writing and give them the salaries and status that demand respect from colleagues. As long as teaching students to use their language is viewed as a lesser ideal than teaching students to appreciate their language, we will perpetuate the system that makes teaching writing an extra and burdensome task. I know that among the ranks of disgruntled teaching assistants and part-time instructors Mr. Lyons would find experienced and potentially dedicated writing teachers—if only that discipline might be accorded some respect and a living wage.

I do believe that one of the responsibilities of our graduate schools is to protect and transmit our literary heritage. I think that Mr. Lyons also believes this to be true (perhaps more than his article implies). But that heritage is nourished by the language itself, and today it is our language that demands our attention.

RUTH G. NEWMAN  
Lecturer in Business  
Administration  
Harvard University  
Boston, Mass.

I am sure that you will receive many howls of protest about "The Higher Illiteracy," but I find that every word rings true. Having been a community college teacher for thirteen years I find the drop in standards of literacy frightening. Each year we have an increasing number of students who have had no grammar or composition courses in senior high and few courses in which they have had to do any writing whatsoever. They don't read, can't write, and don't know the meaning of the word plagiarism.

Our salvage efforts are impeded by the students' knowledge that the four-year colleges to which they will transfer also do not require much literacy. Students complain because we require two semesters of freshman composition when the University of Maryland requires only one. Although our standards are higher than those of many four-year colleges, our colleagues there treat us with great condescension. They re-



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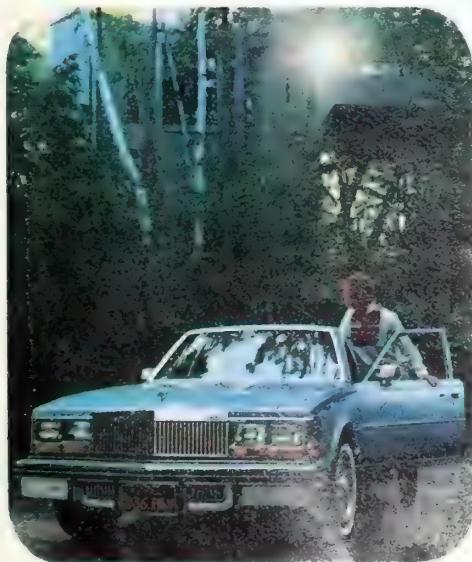
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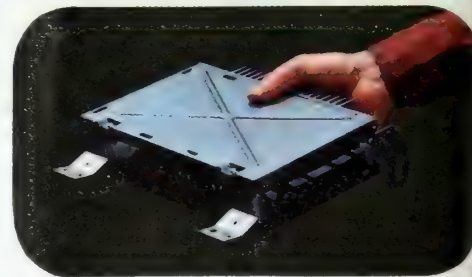
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gard us as professional quacks because we are rated on teaching ability rather than esoteric publications. They feel that because we teach five sections a semester we are in the category of common laborers, not to be taken seriously. I can laugh at their phony status hierarchy, but I am enraged at their inability to educate. I hope you shook up a few of them.

BARBARA MASSON

Associate Professor of Sociology  
Montgomery College  
Takoma Park, Md.

#### GENE LYONS REPLIES:

Things are no doubt better at the University of Massachusetts since Professor Clark has taken over, in that serious scholars have won the day over the other variety. But he is being more than a bit disingenuous with his figures. My own statement, as the context made clear, referred to persons just out of graduate school in 1969, whose careers as full-time assistant professors spanned the great collapse in the academic job market three or four years ago. Persons already or very nearly tenured in 1969 got under the fence there back in the days when just about everybody

did. Had I chosen those who signed on as new boys (or girls) in 1970 or 1971, the truth would have been equally dramatic. Since 1969 a department that had about 110 full-time members, over 70 percent of whom were tenured by 1972 when I resigned, has been reduced to 85. I find the departmental resolution touching; for all of its pussyfooting it represents a kind of progress. Flying a few faculty members from bucolic Amherst 150 miles to the wilds of New York every week strikes me as a commitment to something other than literacy. It also strikes me as a waste of time and money. Surely there is somebody in that city who could use the job and make the trip on a subway token?

I apologize to John Sitter for any embarrassment my statement of fact may have caused him; he is a fine critic and teacher. But the "shotgun marriage" of literacy and literature he speaks of is necessary to the economics of English. Were our universities to take the step Ruth Newman advises (and they will do so only if a place like Harvard will take the lead), the immediate result would be a great increase in the numbers of

unemployed literary scholars.

A teacher's job, it seems to me, is to meet his students where he finds them and help them along as far as he can. As much as he would like to, he can hardly teach them great literature unless and until they are fully literate. That is why, Professor Gibson, I volunteered for and taught composition at the University of Massachusetts both in the regular program and in one of the residential colleges. Since coming to the University of Arkansas-Little Rock, 50 percent of my four-course load has been in composition or expository writing, just like everybody else's here.

#### There are smiles

"The Dixie Smile," by Johnny Greene [September], gives us a glimpse of the real Jimmy Carter. It's not the city slickers we need to watch out for, it's them Good Ole Country Boys who will con us.

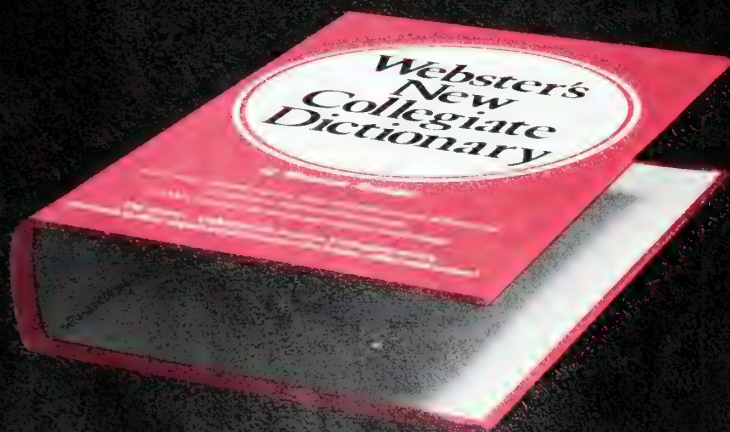
Distrust is precisely Carter's appeal. Cleverly, he manages to appear slightly dishonest. Allegations that he has been less than honest in the past do not hurt him; they play into the scheme. When Lester Maddox said Carter was the most dishonest man he had ever known, it was almost an endorsement. Like most victims of con men who are lured by the prospect of easy gain, many of Carter's supporters think he is really one of their own and that he is just stringing their opponents along for the votes. Southern whites see him as a redneck after the black vote, and blacks see him as the liberal's liberal conning the rednecks. If he should be elected, those to be disappointed by broken promises will surely be outnumbered by those to be disappointed by kept promises.

HAROLD EGGERS

Mountain View, Calif.

I am a white male and a lifelong resident of the South. When I read Johnny Greene's account—supposedly apocryphal—of the meeting between Averell Harriman and Jim Folsom, I winced. Most of the Southerners I know would wince. Certainly none of my friends would "slap his kneecap or the shoulder of someone sitting nearby" (I don't suppose I have seen anyone actually

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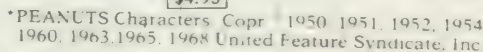


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his knee in response to a joke many as a half-dozen times in my life) or utter anything remotely like the line Greene quotes as typical.

This anecdote—together with Greene's explanation of its symbolic import—operates at the level of the standard ethnic joke: it depends for its effect on the reader's or listener's familiarity with the particular caricature being played upon. The caricature currently informing the media view of the white Southern male—and the caricature on which Greene's whole article depends—is the "Good Ole Boy."

Now, the Good Ole Boy is a faintly romantic, macho character who (as nearly as I can recall his origins) was created in print by some writers with Texas backgrounds at about the same time that Don McLean was celebrating him in song. He has since underpinned the careers of a number of writers from all parts of the South (who were quick to pick up on a hot item), and he has more clearly defined the role that some Southerners like to play when performing for non-Southerners. All great fun, and the big Noo Yawk magazines obviously love it.

But the Good Ole Boy is still, at best, a farceur, good for a cocktail party routine or a CB radio act but unsuited to the heavy dramatic roles certain writers seem bent upon pushing him into. As a serious embodiment of evil, for instance, he just falls flat on his ole face. As we say down here, "That dog won't hunt."

The South produces a lot of good writers who, naturally enough, write *about* the South. Much of this is not for the literal-minded: just as most Southerners' thoughts don't flow in the style of Quentin Compson's interior monologues, most Southerners don't really think, speak, and act like Good Ole Boys turned sinister. Johnny Greene either knows this (in which case, he is being dishonest) or he doesn't (in which case, he has been conned).

Greene happens to be partly right (Carter and the Democrats *are* bogus), but for the wrong reasons. (The right reasons would make an interesting article.) If this other ill-natured nonsense continues, maybe we should think about retiring the Good Ole Boy.

DAVID SANDERS  
Jackson, Miss.

Johnny Greene's superficial generalization is a minor annoyance. So white Southern politicians of the old school baited the North and the black man and "forged a political religion of piety and hate." Quite true, and the nation has long been aware of this. So what else is new? Well, according to Mr. Greene, the new thing is that the new breed of Southern politician has exchanged his black-baiting for a smile. His main object in life is still to get revenge for Appomattox, but now he does it with that smile instead of a lynch rope. Presto, you now have Jimmy Carter fully explained. He's exactly like Tom Watson or George Wallace, except that he's updated.

Such simplifications make a caricature of the South and explain nothing. They don't explain a great many new Southern politicians—the Godwins, Helmses, or Connallys, for instance. They don't explain why the new breed of white Southern politician emerged in the first place, or why, at the same time, as Greene admits, a new breed of black Southern politician emerged. They certainly don't explain Jimmy Carter. Carter, attempting to be all things to all men, certainly needs explaining, but Greene's article is of no help.

ARTHUR R. HALL  
Harrisonburg, Va.

"The Dixie Smile" is, without doubt, the nastiest piece of personal spite I have ever read in what should be an unbiased magazine. The man would have only his due if the people of Alabama rode him out of the South. What is said is too bad, and even worse are the intimations that Jimmy Carter is insincere, that he is a collage made up to wreak vengeance on the North.

Unfortunately, many of us, including myself, do not have the personality nor the certain positioning of facial features which make smiling easy. I am glad to see those attributes in Carter, and I would like to see the man given honest coverage rather than being weighted down with jokes. He is no more responsible for Southern history than I am for the Hatfield and McCoy feuding. Let's set the record straight by giving Carter only his own history.

LILLIE D. CHAFFIN  
Pikeville, Ky.



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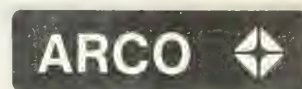
Nearly three-quarters of you are in favor of a slower paced, more rural life.

What's better than statistics is the feeling that the majority of people believe that life in the future can be better than it is today. But we've always been like that. It's what's been called the American Dream.

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We didn't intend to do a scientific survey but your responses show significant insight into the problems and opportunities that face our nation. We plan to make those thoughts available in a book reflecting many of the interesting letters we've received.

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## Golden fleecing

Seven weeks to the day before the November 2 election, in which I am a candidate for reelection to the Senate, *Harper's* magazine hit the newsstands with an article by Vic Gold ["Calling to the Yahoo," October] comparing me with my predecessor, Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

Mr. Gold no longer works for Spiro Agnew, but his partisan Republican pen is as sharp as ever. He has used the oldest debating trick in the trade, namely, the attempt to smear a public figure by charging that the public figure uses smear tactics.

But in my criticism of foolish and wasteful government spending I have never accused an individual of disloyalty to the country, membership in the Communist party, or of making any personal expenditures not directly related to the public funds spent.

Mr. Gold's main criticism appears to be that "more than half of all Golden Fleece releases have featured reports with some sexual connotation." On that point he is just dead wrong. Of the twenty Golden Fleecees, only three remotely had a sex or love connotation. More than that have been on military subjects—the Army Corps of Engineers, the Navy, the Air Force's Eighty-ninth Air Wing, and the Selective Service. Among other recipients are Congress, the White House, the Bureau of Land Management, the General Services Administration, and NASA, to name a few. Emphasis on sexual subjects, my foot!

A principal Vic Gold example is the granting of the Golden Fleece to the Federal Aviation Agency for a \$57,800 study of the body measurements of fifty-five American Airlines stewardess trainees. Gold justifies the spending on safety grounds, namely, that sixty-six flight attendants were killed in commercial air crashes between 1964 and 1970, but he cleverly leaves out of his article the statement from the study included in my release that the measurements were useless for the development of safety equipment for the other fifty-four North American airlines. As the study says:

*Although all airlines recruit stewardesses from the same gen-*

*eral population of young females, each has its own selection standards for age, height, weight, education and other variables. Therefore, we might expect the stewardess complement of each airline to be anthropometrically unique—a factor to be considered in the application of the present data taken from a single airline to the stewardess population as a whole.*

The money went down the drain. It had as much to do with safety as the flowers that bloom in the spring. That's McCarthyism?

In another example Mr. Gold claims that I would probably not have given the Golden Fleece to the government's support of "The Effects of Marijuana on Human Sexual Response" if the study had been called "The Effects of Cannabis on Testosterone Production." He may be right. But the fact is that this study did *not* receive the Golden Fleece, and the reality is that hard-pressed taxpayers funded a study which measured the erections of young males who watched pornographic movies after inhaling marijuana.

If a private foundation or university wants to fund such a study, it may. My objection is paying for it with federal dollars. People may disagree with me about that, but is that criticism really a threat to academic freedom and scientific inquiry or an example of McCarthyism?

Mr. Gold objects to my use of alliteration and puns—a field in which he is both highly competent and respected. But what is surprising is to find a conservative who is so zealous in the defense of big government and wasteful spending.

The fundamental basis of the scientific method is for scientists to subject their work to criticism. That is why scientific works are published and sufficient data made available so that others can duplicate it. The best way to get at the truth and to winnow out falsehood is to subject scientific inquiry to the sunshine of criticism.

We appear to be developing a group of thin-skinned behavioral scientists who suffer from an elitist arrogance. They and their defenders, like Mr. Gold, claim that every criticism is an attack on academic freedom or an example of McCarthyism.

When I criticized the C-5A and

the B-1 bomber, the Pentagon's defenders used similar arguments. Senators and Congressmen are too ignorant to judge highly technical programs, they said.

Scientists should have more faith. If they are right and I am wrong their work will long outlast any criticism I may throw at them. On the other hand, if research is written in unintelligible jargon, it will die, and it deserves to die. But if their only defense is to yell "academic freedom," "yahoo critics," or "McCarthyism," both they and the public should look out. In that case they are probably dead wrong.

SEN. WILLIAM PROXMIRE  
Washington, D.C.

## VIC GOLD REPLIES:

Speaking of elitist arrogance, penises, and taxpayers' money—since the original publication of my article Senator Proxmire's colleagues have thoughtfully voted to provide federal funds to underwrite his legal defense against a suit filed by one of the hapless victims of his monthly smears. Proxmire's rationale for tapping the public treasury to subsidize his personal defense? Why, it's none other than that old McCarthyite claim that tax-funded Senate press releases fall within the purview of special Congressional prerogatives.

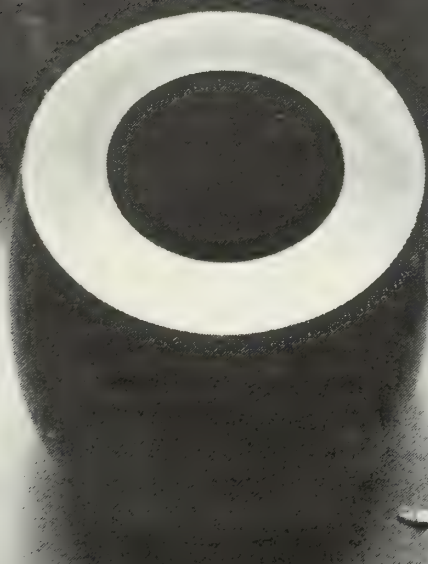
Weaned on the stereotypes of doctrinaire liberalism, Proxmire obviously confuses conservative thought with Yahoo mindlessness. I stand by my article and invite a sunshine comparison of the facts therein and the Senator's splenetic Proxmire-ite response.

## Reprints Available

Reprints of "Requiem for the Women's Movement," by Veronica Geng, are available from the Reprint Department, *Harper's Magazine*, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Reprints are \$1 each for five or fewer copies, and 75 cents each for six to ten copies. On orders of more than ten copies, the cost is 75 cents each for the first ten and 50 cents for each additional copy. Please include payment with order.



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## ANSWERING THE MAIL

With regard to the South, Jimmy Carter, and the American dream

by Lewis H. Lapham

**M**UCH OF THE pleasure associated with editing *Harper's* comes from reading the mail. The readers of the magazine show themselves to be a company of knowledgeable critics—sometimes discursive, often eloquent, always suspicious of the seasonable opinions put up for sale by the literary impresarios in New York City. They do not suffer peaceably the pronouncements of those whom they regard as fools, and they distrust the use of extravagant rhetoric. Toward the end of the summer I received a letter from a gentleman in Placerville, California, who said that he didn't want to read any more tendentious statements about Richard M. Nixon. He had met Mr. Nixon several years ago, he said, and he didn't like the fellow, but he thought that anybody who wanted to denounce Mr. Nixon as the Antichrist ought to give specific reasons. Quite frequently the readers write at length, taking the trouble to set forth their views on the fall of Rome, the presence of parasites in the intestines of wolves, the failure of the Western ideal of citizenship, or the general lack of appreciation for the works of Louis-Ferdinand Céline. Sometimes they send suggestions for further reading, in the hope, usually forlorn, that the editor will "find his way back to the precincts of reason"; at other times they enclose passages from the anthologies of moral authority. Quotations from Plato usually appear in letters commending the magazine, those from Ezra Pound in letters that revile it.

I answer as many of the letters as I can, but I seldom have the time to write at the length that so much of the correspondence deserves. Over the past year I have begun to form a clearer impression of the kind of people who read *Harper's*, and the more I know of them the more I like them. The idea of liberalism has fallen into disfavor during the last few years, but the readers of the magazine retain their faith in the most

*Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.*

hopeful aspects of that idea. They associate it with an inquiring but tolerant habit of mind, with a willingness to learn from experience, and with a conviction that the democratic mode of government encourages the individual citizen to extend his capacities—intellectual, financial, sexual, moral—along the line of his highest aspiration. Although they suspect that something has gone wrong with the country, they resist instruction in the lessons of despair. Demagogues address them through a haze of klieg lights; their taxes increase at least twice a year; educational standards decline; the value of the currency deteriorates; and the landscape falls into disrepair. But, instead of succumbing to the general pessimism, they ask themselves the question, What can we do about this? Those among them who also send manuscripts for possible publication invariably take sides against what they perceive as the forces of repression, ignorance, and greed. They align themselves with whatever opposing forces they think might serve to nourish the evolution of the human mind.

**G**IVEN MY REGARD for the readers of *Harper's*, I feel obliged to respond to their indignant condemnation of an article published in the September issue under the title "The Dixie Smile." A few readers contented themselves with sardonic humor, referring to the "brigade of Yankee lies" that has marched through the pages of the magazine since 1861, and suggesting that perhaps the *Harper's* correspondent at Appomattox had failed to receive the dispatches from Grant's headquarters. Mr. Arthur Halliburton in Little Rock, Arkansas, expressing his dismay in one of the most amiable tones of voice that I have ever encountered in a letter to an editor, raised the question of definition. "What," he asked, "is a genuine redneck? I suppose it's a white man or woman

who works outdoors and gets a red neck from the sun. At this moment there are two of them, forest rangers (not counting two small boys who are the assistants and progeny of one of the men) fighting a fire in the woods back of my house. They seem like decent fellows to me."

The majority opinion has not been so polite. Most correspondents found themselves in uncharacteristic agreement about what they variously identified as "xenophobic swill," "veromous slander," "malicious bigotry," and "disgusting prejudice" against the South, Southerners, Jimmy Carter, the American dream, and the Democratic party. Having read the offending article again, not once but two or three times, I can appreciate the reasons for the misinterpretation. These didn't occur to me when I first read the manuscript, possibly because I had had prior conversations with the author and understood his affection for the South.

The article was written by Johnn Greene, a journalist born and raised in Demopolis, Alabama. He discussed the rhetorical evangelism with which, since the Reconstruction, Southern politicians have advertised themselves as prophets of the Lord arising in the barren places of the earth to bring divine vengeance to the corrupt and the unfaithful. Jimmy Carter has had a great deal of success with this persona in the Northern press, and I think that Mr. Greene wanted to suggest that it was a persona not entirely convincing to those Southerners who had some acquaintance with it. Mr. Greene's ancestors settled in Demopolis during the early years of the nineteenth century, and he has had occasion to listen to a generation of redeemers who, like the descendants of Fler Snopes, have an unfortunate way of proving themselves subservient to the Northern commercial interest. He was writing a polemic as opposed to an essay of manners, and I suspect that he intended it as a cautionary tale rather than as a denunciation of his birthright.



I assumed that this would have been clear from the context, and I regret that so many readers thought it necessary to observe that Mr. Greene failed to present a complex portrait of the Southern mind, that he reduced his argument to stereotype and cliché. The objection misses the point. All political images consist of stereotype and cliché. It is the stuff of which they are made. To talk about a political image is to talk about a papier-mâché float in a Mardi Gras parade. Candidates for office in New York City must present themselves as immigrants newly arrived in Eden. They peer over the heads of a crowd in a squalid street and profess to descry, somewhere in the haze beyond Ellis Island, the land of milk and honey. Their confederates in California wear the masks of pioneers, pushing forward with the wagons into the San Joaquin Valley or forcing an entry into the Casbah of Oriental religion. The caricatures explain almost nothing about the politicians who make use of them, but they sometimes explain a great deal about the unhappiness of the people who mistake them for portrait painting.

With regard to "The Dixie Smile," I notice that the correspondents writing from the West, the Midwest, and the Northeast take pains to inform me that the South is a complicated place; the Southern correspondents point out, in more or less the same terms as those employed by Jane Sturdivant of Memphis, Tennessee, that they know how "the North views us...—as inferior, foolishly proud, emotional children." The juxtaposition of the two attitudes implies a confusion of images. For as long as I can remember, the Northern press has been infatuated with what it perceives as the romance of the South. The intensity of the infatuation pays tribute to the genius of those Southern writers, among them William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, and Robert Penn Warren, whose collected work has created a world of mythological dimension. Through the middle years of the twentieth century, during a period when American literature has become synonymous with Southern writers, they have established a sense of place after which the rest of the country yearns as if after a childhood dream. To the rootless traders



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## THE EASY CHAIR

of a capitalist society, wandering through airports and inhospitable cities in search of the abstraction of money, the poetic landscape of the South presents itself as a magic theater in which it is still possible to see the mystery play of the human heart. The moral conventions of the country hold that all virtue (as well as all beauty and most truth) resides in small towns. The Southern literary tradition extends the convention into a metaphor for the American soul. Mr. Carter's Presidential campaign draws much of its strength from this metaphor, and I find it ironic that so many correspondents have seen fit to construe the publication of Mr. Greene's article as a nasty piece of work on the part of "the Eastern Liberal Establishment." Leaving aside the matter of substituting one caricature for another, I think it fair to say that Mr. Carter has been steadfastly supported by the instruments of the Northern media, that he has chosen his privy councilors from among the members of the Council on Foreign Relations, and that as governor of Georgia, he advanced the interests of the Coca-Cola Company and the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation. None of these associations strike me as reprehensible, but they do not accord with Mr. Carter's professions of backwoods simplicity.

If the Northern correspondents objected to Mr. Greene's article on the ground of its intolerance, the Southern correspondents had a tendency to worry about social appearances. The literary tradition seemed to have become an embarrassment to them. Their letters reminded me of nouveau-riche landowners who, having made fortunes in real estate, prefer not to be reminded of poor relations who still go around talking about blood, swamps, and runaway slaves. The attitude is consistent with the prosperity of what the Northern press likes to describe, usually every three or four years, as "the new South." The news of sudden resurgence obscures the awareness of long-established success. Southern politicians have held the strong points of the Congress since the end of World War II. For at least a generation, largely as a result of the enormous sums appropriated to the defense and munitions industries, the balance of payments between

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#### THE EASY CHAIR

Washington and the rest of the country has tended to favor the South and West. It never would occur to me to describe the inhabitants of those regions, among them the most prominent literary, political, and financial figures of the past decade, as either foolish or inferior.

**I**F I HAVE A HABIT of placing too much emphasis on the shabbier aspects of the public discourse, it is not, as a number of readers have supposed, because I am cynical. More probably it is because I find it disheartening that so many people continue to insist on the idea that power must also be virtuous. This is like thinking that a rich man must also be wise. As I read the letters from readers who believe that Mr. Carter might indeed be the Messiah, I am reminded of the spectacle of Nelson Rockefeller as governor of New York and the history of American diplomacy in Indochina. Being admired for his wealth, Mr. Rockefeller acquired a subsidiary reputation for political vision; because the United States could manufacture impressive quantities of explosives, it

appropriated unto itself an assumption of Christian conscience.

The drama of melancholy disillusion that has been playing in the national press for the past ten years provides an excuse for not doing what needs to be done. If the country can occupy itself (admittedly an entertaining and sometimes profitable occupation) with the assignment of praise or blame, then nobody needs to think too much about unemployment, crime, inflation, racial discrimination, energy policy, or the military budget. My argument always implies, or at least proceeds from, my hope for the human aspirations that the political caricatures so often misrepresent. Despite everything that can be said against the United States, I can think of no other country in which the political system depends upon the courage, freedom, and imagination of its citizens. The greatness of both the American dream and the American Constitution follows from a belief in the infinite forms of human possibility. The same belief reveals itself in the letters to the editor of *Harper's*, which is why I derive so much pleasure from reading the mail. □

#### THE ISLAND by John W. Dickson

In the town where the houses are all alike  
 and vertical men with keys in their backs  
 are aimed out the door when the sun comes out  
 to stand in platoons by the railroad tracks,  
 the Hogans spend most of the morning in bed,  
 talking and eating fruit and chasing each other  
 under the sheets and laughing at the stern face  
 of the mailman who always peeks in at their open  
 window.

Each symmetrical house on the numbered streets  
 has identical flowers and a peat-moss lawn,  
 a dog with a black spot over its eye  
 and a wife with a pathological yawn,  
 but the Hogans sit in a broken canoe in their  
 weedy backyard and he sings and plays on his  
 old guitar while she dawdles her hand in a tub  
 of water, and when he leans over to kiss her  
 the canoe tips and they sprawl out on the grass.  
 The perpendicular boys and girls  
 in the audio-visual grammar school  
 know how to make a better world  
 and take apart a molecule,  
 but the Hogans write their wishes on bits of  
 paper and burn them in a dish and mutter magic  
 words like the book says they should and they  
 smile confidently as they watch the smoke curl  
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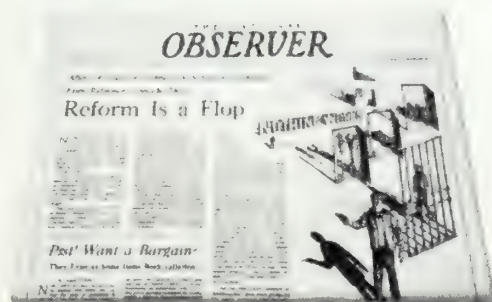
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# iYankee, Come Back!

## On restoring trade with Cuba

by Stephen Schlesinger

**L**AST JUNE I MADE an eight-day trip to Cuba, my first visit to that country. I met actors, editors, government officials, cattle ranchers, students, musicians, farm and store workers. I toured the new high schools and housing projects. From everyone I heard a standard refrain: how Cuba was creating the "new man" and how the revolution was succeeding. None of the propaganda was strange. What surprised me was the country itself and the everyday lives of the people. To an American, it is all so familiar.

After seventeen years of Communist rule, Cuba is still an American-oriented country. Shortly after my arrival a British engineer who's been coming to Cuba on business for ten years told me the Cubans have an "American mentality," and I soon saw what he meant. Baseball is the national sport, basketball a close second. (The premier himself occasionally scampers around the court like an aging player on a Bronx playground.) One of the most popular movies of recent years was *The Godfather, Part II*, and the Cuban people are crazy about such American stars as Harry Belafonte and Sidney Poitier, both of whom happened to be in Cuba while I was there. During their July carnival celebration, Cubans mount floats for a parade and crown a carnival queen. In one of Havana's leading restaurants, Bodequita del Medio, autographed pictures of Ernest Hemingway and Errol Flynn hang on a wall alongside a spread on fashions in Cuba from a 1946 *Life* magazine. Hemingway's old house in Cosimar, outside Havana,

has been preserved as a museum, and the guides show it off to an American with great pride. The Cuban telephone book looks just like ours and comes complete with Yellow Pages. The women of this Marxist paradise wear miniskirts, and one woman I met was eager to know whether safari jackets were fashionable this year in New York. The clothing stores sell American-style jeans. Some Cuban newspapers and magazines use the AP and UPI wire services for their news (albeit illegally, by picking them out of the airwaves without paying a fee). Cubans celebrate Father's Day the same day as we do, and they take Sundays off. They listen to U.S. radio stations from all over the South, including many religious ones, while their own stations churn out American popular, rock, and folk music (without, of course, paying royalties).

If Cubans weren't constantly reminding you of the fact, you could almost forget that the United States interrupted relations with this country in 1961 and imposed a total embargo on all movement of goods between Cuba and the mainland. For all the U.S. automobiles on the road, you might as well be in Dade County, ninety miles away. The government uses late-model Falcons, sold to Cuba by the Ford plant in Argentina under a special State Department dispensation granted in 1974 to foreign subsidiaries of U.S. auto companies. The taxis in Havana are mostly 1973 compact Chevrolets, also from Argentina. On Cuban highways one sees a large number of

*Stephen Schlesinger, a staff writer for Time, is the author of The New Reformers.*

Chevrolets from the Fifties, their bodies rusted and badly painted but the engines still more or less in running condition. I was told that Cubans admire the sturdiness of these cars, even though the inability to acquire spare parts from the mainland makes for serious repair problems. I imagine they also like the tail fins.

Among Cubans old enough to remember the days of Batista, there is high regard for American-made products, and most Cubans I talked to expressed a desire to see U.S.-Cuba trade reopened. The embargo has had an enormous effect on Cuban life. It has demoralized nobody, as far as I could tell. On the contrary, as the Battle of Britain did for the English and the bombing of Hanoi for the North Vietnamese, the embargo has unified the Cubans. I have heard State Department specialists suggest that Castro deliberately provoked a rupture with the U.S. for this very reason. Whether or not that theory is true—and it assumes great wisdom on Castro's part—the embargo decision and the subsequent raids by CIA-equipped Cuban exiles on the Cuban coastline have certainly played into Castro's hands. They justified to most Cubans the need for strict security measures and constant vigilance over the population. In the Sixties, Castro organized neighborhood surveillance groups called the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. He built up the G-2, Cuba's military intelligence arm. He sent his political opponents to prison or to "rehabilitation" camps. He let disaffected members of the middle and upper classes emigrate to Florida. He took



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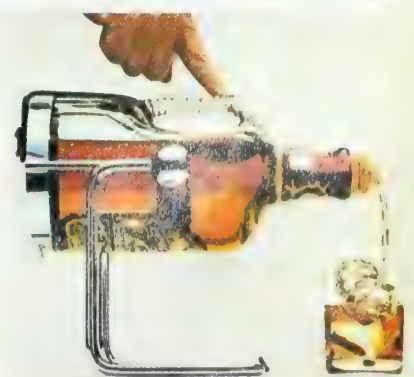
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over the press. He preached discipline in work, and introduced the time clock to Cuban enterprise—all in the name of defeating the common enemy, Uncle Sam.

But as the embargo has fueled the country's ideological sense of mission, on a material level it has left scars. The absence of spare parts for cars, tractors, machinery, tools, printing presses, appliances hits all sectors of the Cuban economy. The inability to import food from the United States has led to a country-wide rationing system which, to this day, leaves Cubans with very little meat in their diets. Forced to trade mainly with Japan, Russia, and the Europeans, Cuba has had to expand the port of Havana and build large warehouses to replace the ones in Florida that used to shelter Cuban-bound goods—and still the foreign ships are backed up outside the harbor while unloaded cargoes pile up in the streets, threatening to rot.

Cubans are beginning to realize that the costs of running an economy on a 5,000-mile shipping lane are simply beyond their means. They know they can buy more cheaply in the United States. They seriously need

American spare parts. They would love to enjoy U.S. food and clothing. As it is they require \$1.5 million to \$2 million a day in aid from the Soviets, a fact of which they are not proud. Certainly they could be well served by infusions of U.S. technology. If American oil companies, for example, were free to sell them oil rigs and train them in offshore drilling, perhaps the Cubans would have an oil industry. Beyond that they know they are missing out on a large potential market in the U.S. for their sugar and their rum, not to mention the highly prized Havana cigar.

**I**N 1975, ONE YEAR AFTER allowing Argentinian subsidiaries of U.S. auto manufacturers to begin trading with Cuba, the State Department lifted the embargo for all foreign subsidiaries of U.S. firms. To a degree, then, U.S.-brand goods, if not U.S.-made ones, are beginning to filter into Cuba. It is noteworthy that the first American businesses to prosper from sales to Cuba have been the large multinational firms. President Ford may not have realized his State Department was

discriminating against small and medium-sized U.S. businesses, but in any event the "opening" to Cuba was kept very quiet by his Administration. There was little fanfare. Soon thereafter the President was busy excoriating Castro for the Cuban entry into Angola. While the State Department was paving the way for relaxed economic relations, the President was branding Castro an "international outlaw" and emphatically restating the terms of the embargo.

This does not seem entirely rational, but then rationality has never been the hallmark of our Cuban policy. I suppose I first became aware of the absurdity of the embargo when one of my Cuban guides complained to me of the impossibility of repairing the Oldsmobiles and Chevrolets which I saw clogging the Havana streets. The newer American cars could be fixed; spare parts were available from Buenos Aires. But parts for the older cars were locked up in Detroit, and although Detroit was making money off the Argentinian sales to Cuba, Detroit's dealerships and subsidiaries throughout the U.S. were not allowed to send a fan belt to Havana. Sitting in my hotel room, with its American-made air conditioner, its American-made electrical sockets, with the prospect at hand of paying my bill by American Express traveler's check, I got the feeling something was amiss.

At the 1975 meeting of the Organization of American States, the U.S. for the first time voted in favor of lifting the general OAS embargo of Cuba (without promising to lift its own embargo). But now, in an election year, the Administration has allowed itself to become obsessed with the Cuban military presence in Angola, and with Cuba's inflammatory rhetoric on independence for Puerto Rico. Our government appears to be ignoring the many concessionary noises issuing out of Havana. In recent months Cuba has made it clear that she is withdrawing troops from Angola at a steady pace. Not one Cuban official I spoke with ever mentioned the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo as an impediment to improved relations, although for years that base was the hated symbol of U.S. imperialism.

As for being a destabilizing influence in the hemisphere, the Cubans have virtually ceased their revolu-

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tionary activities in Latin America. Last year Castro told Sen. George McGovern that he would agree to a partial lifting of the U.S. embargo if the two countries began trading in such goods as medical supplies and food, and would consider compensating the United States for American property seized by his government. Castro's brother Ramon, an agricultural minister whom I met during my visit, told me that all Cuba really wants from the U.S. is an end to CIA harassment and a measure of respect for the visible achievements of the revolution.

Time may be running out on our ability to gain advantage from a lifting of the embargo. As the British engineer explained it: "The older administrators in Cuba still like U.S. products the best. But a new generation is taking over the management of the economy, and they don't remember the U.S. market. They're accustomed to dealing with Europe and Japan. So a firm like mine is happy to see you Americans dragging your feet. We hope you don't lift the embargo for at least another five years, by which time the younger Cubans will be running the government, and Cuba's American orientation will have been eclipsed. The tilt will be more firmly toward us and the Japanese."

Economics aside, the U.S. may be missing a splendid opportunity to wean Cuba away from the influence of the Soviet Union. Cuban troops, after all, are in Angola partly because Cuba is fundamentally dependent upon Russian aid, to the extent of more than \$500 million a year. Without it, the Cuban economy could be in disarray.) Perhaps in the previous decade it served Cuba to be identified with Moscow, but today the Cubans are not happy to be dependent upon any country; Cuba now wishes to be identified with the Third World, not with any of the rich industrial nations.

The world has become so small that geography no longer counts for much in the calculation of an international strategy. For seventeen years we have feared Cuba, vilified it, tried to deal it mortal blows; it refuses to go away. Perhaps the time has come to start thinking of Cuba as just another Latin-American nation, worst a minor irritant, and start mending the fan belts. □



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# THE LAWS OF NATURE

A case for the landscape as plaintiff

by Peter Steinhart

**T**HE SOUNDS ISSUING from our courts of law are often taken as a measure of the nobility of our nation. In the past, these sounds have been reassuringly august. Celebrated cases, such as *Marbury v. Madison*, *Brown v. the Board of Education*, or even *Barenblatt v. the United States* suggested a judicial machinery busily grinding out matters of great significance and, by extension, a high-minded and vigorous people.

Soon we will hear new and decidedly unsettling names upon our dockets. Lawsuits such as *Mush Mountain v. New Mexico*, *Half Dome v. Kleppe*, or *Fly Valley v. Butz* may tempt Americans into thinking they have descended into the trivial and absurd. That, however, would be a mistake.

Such cases have already begun to appear on our courtroom calendars. Last year the Byram River sued to stop the village of Port Chester, New York, from polluting it. Billerica Common, a small park in Massachusetts, was plaintiff in a civil action against the U.S. Department of Transportation. Russell E. Train, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and a real person, was served with a complaint by the No Bottom Marsh, a nonperson residing in New York. And Death Valley National Monument is currently suing its administrative guardian, the Department of the Interior, to gain protection from strip miners.

Setting aside the question of

whether Mr. Butz's name is as musical as Mr. Barenblatt's, the novel aspect of these courtroom billings is that they are contests between animate and inanimate objects. Skeptical nonlawyers guffaw at this idea. After all, what is Death Valley going to say in court? Can it talk? "Well," answers Sierra Club attorney Michael Sherwood, "if you listen very carefully, you'll hear that Death Valley makes the same sound as a corporation or a ship."

**T**HE LEGAL ARGUMENT being advanced on behalf of natural objects was shaped by Christopher D. Stone, a law professor at the University of Southern California. In "Should Trees Have Standing?" an article in the Spring 1972 *Southern California Law Review*, Stone proposed that such entities as rivers, oceans, forests, deserts, beaches, or valleys be allowed to institute legal actions, report their injuries, and collect indemnities. The present custom, by which men receive payment in compensation for the reduced value of damaged or spoiled property, usually recognizes these entities as being only of economic or commercial value. Stone urged that natural objects be empowered in their own right to sue for damages, or for their very preservation. As Stone observed, administrative agencies charged with

*Peter Steinhart, a Californian, writes about natural history and environmental affairs.*

environmental protection don't always fulfill their obligations. Economic pressures and political machinations regularly obstruct their work, and their jurisdictions may not extend to all natural objects in a domain. Where agencies fail to prosecute energetically, private citizens usually lack standing because they cannot prove sufficient personal economic injury to get into court. Even when a private citizen has a case, as when lakeside homeowners and resort operators suffer demonstrable losses through water pollution, all compensation goes to the landowners, while nothing is done to restore the waterway. Not infrequently a settlement is made out of court, and the polluter goes on polluting because it is cheaper to pay off property owners than to abate his pollution.

To remedy these situations, Stone urged that natural objects be given legal standing. A guardianship would be established whenever a river or a forest is endangered. The law could borrow the logic that applies when a conservator is appointed for a mental incompetent, a trustee for a bankrupt corporation, or an executor for an estate. The guardian acts in the name and for the immediate benefit of his ward, not as guardian of the interests of unborn generations. "What I've done," says Stone, "is simply incorporate a lake. It's something easily grasped by a corporation lawyer. You appoint an attorney and set up a bank account."

Law is frequently expressed in



measurables: in dollars of compensation or years of penitence. Where men have wished to save songbirds, they have first had to assign them an economic value as, say, insect-eaters, before lodging a complaint within the legal system. Recent legislation has begun to relax the hold of economics on the law. A Wyoming statute, for example, requires strip-mining companies to set aside funds for repair and restoration before undertaking to scar the landscape. Since 1966 Congress has attempted to save endangered species for historical and scientific reasons, rather than commercial ones. The Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1970 goes further by pledging Congress to "the human ethic that animals should be accorded the basic creature comforts of adequate housing, ample food and water, reasonable handling, decent sanitation, sufficient ventilation, shelter from extremes of weather and temperatures."

These laws are part of a long evolution, during which men have raised their ethical horizons from the level of the individual to the levels of the family, tribe, nation, and so on. Most ethical advances arise from new uses of power in a changing society. The Ten Commandments put into writing the rules of conduct across the lines of the family, and modern democratic constitutions extended moral principles to diverse cultural and economic groups. In this century, Americans have grown apprehensive of the ability of corporate and political power to destroy species, watersheds, air basins, and human populations. Environmental questions have increasingly been phrased as questions of morality, and since World War II we have enacted laws to protect the wilderness, its creatures, and air and water quality.

Such laws as these are often expressed in vague terms, such as *fragile*, *aesthetic*, or *intangible values*. The National Environmental Policy Act proposes "to insure that present unquantified environmental amenities and values may be given appropriate consideration in decision making along with economic and technical considerations." The lack of clearly articulated ends and values reflects the novelty of the enterprise. We are hastening to protect the natural world, but we have not yet had sufficient time to agree upon

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What exactly is desirable in it.

To those who still see our national theme as one of material rather than moral progress, the court decisions arising out of these laws seem bizarre. In May, for example, a federal judge ordered fishermen to stop purse seining for yellowfin tuna because their fishing methods killed porpoises, which are safeguarded under the Marine Mammals Protection Act. In June the Supreme Court ruled that the desert pupfish, which lives in Devils Hole, Nevada, and which never grows more than an inch long, has a preemptive right to groundwater coveted by local ranchers for irrigation.

Stunning as these isolated decisions have been, the courts in general have not rushed to sanctify nature. In 1972, when the Supreme Court reviewed the Mineral King case, *Sierra Club v. Morton*, Christopher Stone had reason to hope that his law-review article would influence the court. The majority, however, denied the *Sierra Club* standing, holding that in order to get into court a plaintiff must show that he has sustained some direct injury "and not merely that he suffers in some indefinite way in common with people generally." Only Justice Douglas had read Stone's article. In his dissent he urged that litigation be brought "in the name of the inanimate object about to be despoiled, defaced, or invaded by roads and bulldozers and where injury is the subject of public outrage." Justices Blackmun and Brennan seemed to agree with Douglas that an expanded concept of standing was necessary in environmental cases. But a year later in *SCRAP v. U.S.*, the court still applied a test of material injury in order to "prevent the judicial process from becoming no more than a vehicle for the vindication of the value interests of concerned bystanders."

**I**T IS CLEARLY a large step from the protection by statute of an endangered species to the conferral of the right to sue upon plants, animals, and places. Opinion varies on whether and how quickly the law will extend itself that far. One attorney, Nicholas Robinson, endorsed standing for natural objects in the *New York Law Journal*

as a means "to respect life existing in Nature independently of our will, and upon which we have dependencies only dimly now perceived." He noted that Justice Blackmun's dissent in *Sierra Club v. Morton* looked wistfully to the same ethic in quoting Donne's "No man is an island." Bill Butler of the Environmental Defense Fund believes Stone's proposal is "too imaginative and too kooky for this Court." While many a district judge might sympathize with the idea, the present Supreme Court has distinguished itself by its desire to limit access to its time in defense of an overcrowded calendar. Stone himself looks only for gradual change. "The issue will not come up bluntly. The courts never decide an issue larger than they want to, and most judges want to make the issue seem comfortable with the law as it exists." He expects an early test to involve whales or dolphins. "An issue there would be that these are sentient, intelligent animals, like us."

Still, many are anxious to test the issue. A Hawaiian attorney has named Makena Beach plaintiff in one suit. Helen E. Jones brought a suit "as friend and guardian for all livestock now and hereafter awaiting slaughter" in kosher slaughterhouses. Most of these suits have settled out of court and skirted the issue of standing. If the Department of the Interior chooses not to challenge the standing of Death Valley, Michael Sherwood has another cause waiting offstage in the form of the palila, an endangered bird whose habitat is threatened by foraging goats and sheep maintained for the pleasure of hunters by the Hawaiian Department of Land and Natural Resources. "Since we're talking about the continued existence of a species," says Sherwood, "the palila should have standing. We should certainly hear from it."

What will happen to our traditional order of things if Death Valley or the dolphins or the palila manage to achieve legal standing? Will courtroom dockets be flooded with the names of humble plants and obscure insects? Might *Plethobaxis cicatricosus*, the white wartyback pearly mussel, drag the state of Tennessee to the Supreme Court? Could a favorite cat sue to break Aunt Agatha's will because she left nothing for its care? Might we find ourselves sued

by sponges and litigated by lilies?

There are limits to all legal rights. Twelve-year-olds can't vote, and corporations can't plead the Fifth Amendment. The recognition of an ethic embracing natural objects offers trees in general no extraordinary right to escape the chain saw. Not everything in the environment would have the same rights as everything else in the environment. Forests, oceans, grasslands, species, and other productive units of the environment might go to court, but individual houseflies and blackbirds would not. As Stone says, "No lawyer I know in the real world is about to invest his time going to court to ask for a guardianship over an oyster or an earthworm. And I don't know of any judge who would grant the motion if he or she did. I expect we are less likely to suffer from a surfeit of trivial environmental representatives than to gain from new voices being heard in eminently sensible cases."

If consideration of things that flit and buzz and sound of desolation seems at all trivial in the lengthening shadows of nuclear armament and political scandal, it is worth recalling that this concern is part of a long and continuous development. While it may now seem ludicrous that trees should have standing, not long ago it seemed preposterous that blacks, Asians, women, and children should have rights. The conferral of rights is the achievement which men claim as their very finest, their act of purest generosity and greatest enlightenment. The discussion of legal rights for natural objects marks an ongoing achievement.

For Americans, the most inviting light in this ethical realm is the suggestion of a future. The remorse and self-doubt that we have drawn out of our experiences in Vietnam and Watergate are painful because we interpret them as proof that America has reached the limits of moral development and that our vast political and corporate power cannot be controlled. There is abroad the gloomy feeling that as a nation we have passed our climax. Power is the real problem—not getting it but exercising it wisely. The environmental movement does not solve that problem, but it assures us that the concern and energy needed to solve it are abundant and likely to lead us into happier adventures. □



# WHY CAN'T THE U.S. BE MORE LIKE BURUNDI?



Frank Bozzo

A proposal for improving the quality of life

by Keir McLaren

**W**HILE THE FIGHT rages on in Congress over the ecological consequences of the French supersonic airship Concorde and its possible damaging effects on the ozone layer, the Burundians solved the problem years before the Concorde was built. This small Central African nation let the environmentalists design their one airport.

The Greater Bujumbura International Airport, which is only open on Tuesdays, was constructed with just one runway. The airstrip is big enough to handle a twin-engine Cessna. When the French made inquiries of the Burundian Foreign Minister about the possibility of instituting a daily Paris-to-Bujumbura flight, the minister smiled and said, no. Consequently, the ozone layer above Burundi remains intact.

The 100 million automobiles in the U.S. pose a major threat to clean air. They pour tons of pollutants into the atmosphere. The 3,200 cars registered in Burundi pose no threat to the air quality. The decision of the Burundian Minister of Transportation to pave only fifty miles of high-

way in the entire nation greatly reduces the pollution from the internal combustion engine. Burundians who own cars keep them parked in the garage a great deal of the time.

The diesel locomotive is no threat to clean air in Burundi because the country has no railroads. The most popular form of mass transit is walking. Because of the warm climate, Burundians are able to quietly propel themselves about the countryside in their bare feet.

If there are few cars, no airlines, and no rail system, how does a Burundian travel from city to city? This is a question frequently asked by Americans. Here the true nature and scope of the Burundian genius is evident. Burundi has only one city.

The Burundian government has allowed no industry into the country. This eliminates big business, the major polluter in the United States. Lack of industrialization permits Burundians to live the idyllic farm life. Ninety-five percent of all Burundians are engaged in agriculture.

*Keir McLaren, a former social worker, is currently writing a novel.*

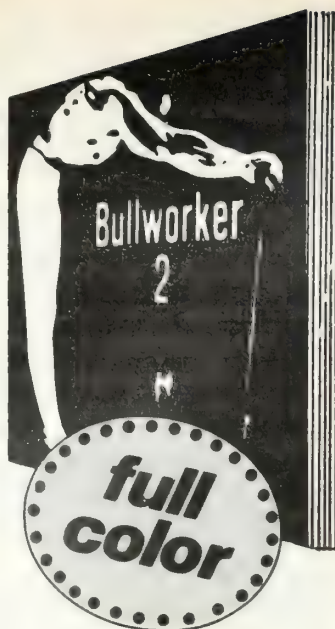
Government planning promises to keep the people "down on the farm" for quite some time.

The leaders of Burundi have discovered education is a prerequisite for advanced technology. Consistent with Burundi's antipollution stand, the Department of Education has managed to keep 90 percent of the population illiterate. American educators have already adopted the Burundi system of education. The basic tenet of this system is never to teach the student anything, no matter how much he wants to learn. The Burundi system advocates the teaching of gym, current events, television watching, and anything else the creative teacher can come up with to avoid teaching the child to read, write, or learn mathematics. This system has been so successful in Burundi that only 360 students are currently enrolled at Burundi University.

The problem of overpopulation has not been licked in Burundi. It is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa. The environmentally aware government has instituted a two-part program they hope will



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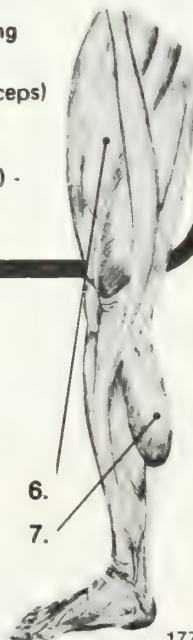
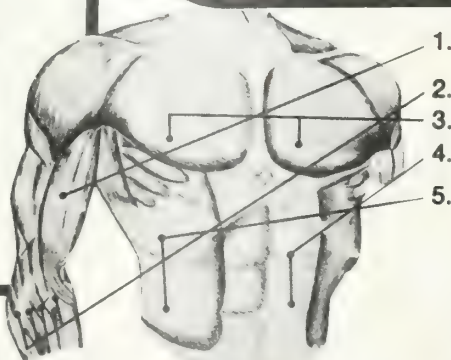
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### WHY CAN'T THE U.S....?

bring the population growth rate under control.

Part one of the program, dubbed "mass executions" by the foreign press, is carried out yearly by the ruling Watusi tribe. (These are the seven-foot giants of dance fame). They compile a "list" of all Burundians who are educated, own property, are wealthy, or otherwise pose a threat to the ecology of Burundi. After the "list" is completed, the Watusi systematically slaughter all those antienvironmentalists whose names appear on the current "list." In 1972, for example, the Watusi exterminated over 100,000 potential polluters in six weeks.

Part two of the plan, labeled "no doctor in the house" by some cynics, is another important weapon in the fight against overpopulation. Medical services are almost unknown in Burundi. Malaria and sleeping sickness are endemic. This keeps the average life-span in Burundi down to a comfortable thirty-nine years. (No problem with the aged here). Fifty percent of the population is below the age of fourteen.

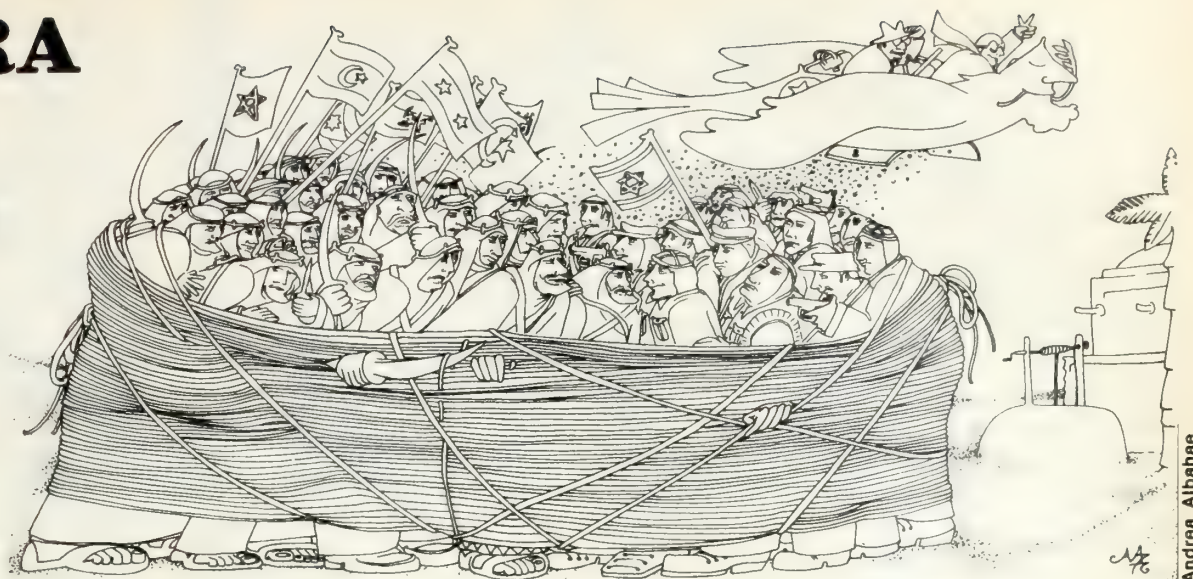
A major problem faced by the environmental movement in the U.S. is the constant demand for consumer goods from the middle class. Many of these items, such as hair spray and deodorant, are both dangerous to the ecology and a waste of the earth's resources.

Because the average annual income in Burundi is \$15, there is not a large middle class in Burundi. A Burundian can expect to make the equivalent of 270 U.S. dollars in his working lifetime. This is hardly sufficient to allow the average Burundian to purchase golf clubs, billiard tables, sailboats, stereos, or tape decks. How far can even the most budget-conscious Burundian stretch \$15 a year?

U.S. environmentalists look at Burundi with awe. It's going to take plenty of hard work and sacrifice to come close to duplicating the success of Burundi. They point out encouraging signs here at home. For example: the continued unchecked rampage of cancer and heart disease, steadily dropping reading levels in colleges and secondary schools, and the energy crisis. We are at present woefully behind, but these few examples show that, with hard work, we can catch up with Burundi. □



# CHIMERA IN THE MIDDLE EAST



Against a rational interpretation of Arab-Israeli relations  
by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

**A**mericans may not live the tidiest lives nor be governed by the tidiest polity, but it is all too apparent that they are continually being fetched by the tidiest conceptions about the way life ought to be led both by individuals and by nations. A neater world has never been imagined, not even by the Victorians, and it is this proclivity for conferring tidiness on the world that no doubt explains our ability to bewilder our enemies, and to render our allies neurotic. When Air Force One soars off past the twelve-mile limit, premonitory pangs are felt by every foreign minister in the world. Even Field Marshal Amin must wince. American statesmen, full of high-mindedness and prep-school verities, have been in attendance at practically every diplomatic disaster of this century. They always arrive with sonorous proposals and militant confidence only to return home bereft of their valuables and occasionally without their pantaloons—across my mind's eye trudge webegone images of the late Woodrow and the sainted Franklin.

Now, these goody-goody Machiavellians may indeed be genuinely amusing, but their fatuous notions of the world are pernicious. If we do not rid ourselves of them I fear we may become more than a mere international laughingstock; I fear we may become accessories to the fact

in bumping off yet another of the world's democracies. Israel comes to mind.

For instance, it is about time to give up on the idea that there are always two sides to every disagreement. This axiom certainly did not apply to Poland's hostilities with either Germany or Russia in 1939, nor did it apply in Tibet in 1951 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. I doubt it applies in the Middle East. What is more, though we put great stock in a system of laws, it is about time we faced up to the fact that others do not share our enthusiasm for this quaint Western concept. A nation of laws is not what inspires those who are pillaging and murdering in the Middle East and Northern Ireland. Finally, may I make bold to suggest that it is about time we lowered our expectations regarding negotiations.

Many Americans seem to believe that for every diplomatic imbroglio and every bloody conflict our Heavenly Father has ordained a reasonable and peaceful resolution; all we need do is snatch it from the empyrean and present it to the grateful disputants. Now of course this is simply untrue. There was no reasonable and peaceful resolution of hostilities agreeable to both sides in Vietnam, and there exists no such resolution in the Middle East. The only recourse there is a most untidy

*R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr., is editor in chief of The Alternative: An American Spectator.*

one: continued Israeli vigilance and readiness to respond in kind to Arab violence. The Israelis have no choice other than to remain on the wartime footing that they have maintained since 1947-48. American diplomats will quite properly continue to look for a reasonable resolution of hostilities, but they must guard against falling into the syndrome this pursuit of reasonable resolutions always brings with it, to wit: impatience with the difficulties of prolonged conflict and eventual capitulation to some hare-brained diplomatic poultice. In the Middle East, if America loses its patience or its confidence and falls for such a resolution, all it faces is a diminution of prestige; if Israel accepts such a resolution, it faces catastrophe.

**T**HE MIDDLE EAST is one of those suppurating wounds on the globe that will not respond positively to any of our tidy notions of statecraft. At issue is a strip of land which once contained 3 million Jews. Throughout the 2,000 years that have followed, the area has variously been governed by Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Seljuks, Crusaders, Mamluks, Ottomans, Englishmen, and now 2.6 million descendants of David. During this time property values have followed an erratic course, and the neighborhood's ethnic identity has



inged at least four times. By the early nineteenth century the population of the area had diminished to around 250,000. Then Jews and Arabs began returning. For the Jews this was the culmination of a long spiritual yearning. Throughout the Diaspora the "return to the land" was a principal theme that grew not only from their religious exercises but also from their experiences with inhospitable Europeans who were touchy about how one's Sundays were spent and who suspected the Jews to be inordinately cunning in their commercial ventures, a suspicion quickly dispelled when the Jews began embarking for Palestine.

The area was no California. It was rocky, marshy, and sandy. A crowd of more than five people generally brought on an epidemic. Nonetheless, the Jews kept coming, and so did the Arabs. By 1914 the Jewish population had reached 85,000. Shortly thereafter, the British took over from the defeated Ottomans, and on November 2, 1917, issued the Balfour Declaration sympathizing with Jewish aspirations to secure a homeland in Palestine. As the Ottoman Empire fragmented, Arab leaders sought

British assistance in gaining former Ottoman territories, and there was also much sympathetic talk from Arab leaders, notably Sharif Hussein of the Hijaz, regarding Jewish political aspirations. In fact, Sharif Hussein's son, after a meeting in 1918 with Dr. Chaim Weizmann of the World Zionist Organization, made written pledges promising to recognize Zionist aims in Palestine. This was apparently the height of Jewish-Arab bliss.

Under Britain's League of Nations mandate, which lasted from 1922 to the end of World War II, Jewish and Arab immigration continued. The Jews scratched away at the stingy soil, established prosperous agricultural cooperatives, and resettled towns they had vacated centuries before. They even established their own political institutions and elected what they called a Representative Assembly and a National Council, which encouraged educational, economic, and social systems. They also coordinated a defense system, for relations had soured between them and their Arab neighbors, who were not making such a fine go of it. By 1948 there were 650,000 Jews in the area

west of the Jordan and about 1.2 million Arabs. The Jews were distinctly more cosmopolitan and industrious than the seminomadic Arabs, and, as conflict stewed, the British began looking for the exits. In 1947 they turned the problem over to the United Nations, which recommended that Palestine be partitioned between the Jews and the Arabs. This the Jews agreed to, but the Arabs wanted hegemony over the entire area, and in their pique they intensified the terrorist activities that have been part of their standard repertoire of political behavior for decades. During the final six months of the British mandate, Arab gangs shot up Jewish towns, crippled agricultural production, and laid siege to Jerusalem. The Jews responded less than passively and made life very hot, especially for the British. On May 15, 1948, the last Englishman suavely vamoosed, and in rushed the armies of Egypt, Transjordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and an assortment of Saudi Arabians; cheered by the assurance of the Secretary-General of the Arab League, Mr. Azzam Pasha, that "this will be a war of extermination and momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and Crusades."

Alas, the Jews proved to be disagreeable, and in the gruesome struggle that ensued 700,000 Arabs fled the country before the Arab armies finally withdrew. Throughout 1949 each Arab state signed a separate armistice with Israel, but no Arab state ever recognized Israel's sovereignty. Nor did the Arab states welcome their Palestinian brethren, most of whom were crowded into United Nations refugee camps along the Israeli border. Since 1949 the Israeli government has managed to assimilate nearly 700,000 Jewish immigrants from the Muslim states of the Middle East and North Africa. But there has been no comparable assimilation attempted by the Arabs, who seem content to allow the Palestinian Arab refugees to remain in their camps as pathetic pawns in a stubborn struggle to eliminate Israel.

Three times since the 1948 war the Arab armies have sallied forth to have at it with the Israelis, and all this has brought them has been more loss of life, a bit more loss of territory, and a terrible economic burden. If any people on this earth have fared

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from their military affluence, I am not aware of them. Egypt, with one of the world's largest armies, is an economic basket case. Syria's condition is not much better; Lebanon is a charnel house; Jordan has all of Syria's problems plus a constant low-lying threat of civil war. And the sheikhs now live not only in dread of their relatives but also in horror of a vast camorra of terrorists that has sprung up armed to the teeth and full of Marxist whim-whams.

If I cannot think of a people who have fared worse at war, neither can I think of a people who, by Western standards, have less to gain from continued fighting. The land they are drooling over is about the size of Massachusetts. The only wealth it has is wealth the Jews have grafted upon it with their hard toil. The Arabs' historical claim to it is no more prepossessing than that of the Israelis. They have plenty of land themselves, and the present Israeli government gives them unfettered access to all their religious shrines. Continued warfare might cause the Israelis dreadful taxation and inflation, but it also strengthens the Palestinian and other radical elements which are causing such loss of sleep among the present Arab magnificoes. Finally, after years of poverty and backwardness, Allah's oil has given the Arabs an opportunity to partake of the twentieth century. One would hope all of this would induce them to smoke the peace pipe, yet the Arab remains, as Iraq's former President Aref declared in 1967, "resolved, determined, and united, to achieve our clear aim of wiping Israel off the map."

Is this really a situation that can be improved by what some of our diplomats have called "evenhandedness"? Are there really two sides to this conflict? Does Mr. Aref sound like a man devoted to principles of legality? How can a conflict be reasonably resolved when one side will not even recognize the statehood of the other?

**A**RABS ARE NOT LIKE Philadelphians, nor are they like Frenchmen, nor even Israelis. This is why our tidy notions about how nations should behave look so hollow and ridiculous when applied to the Mid-

dle East. Arabs are religious fanatics devoted to a non-Western warrior religion. Their bequests to us include the words *assassin* and *jihad*. They have no democratic tradition, no tradition of contract law, and a civilization that is more decadent than Andy Warhol's.

On this earth only the Chinese and the Russians indulge in more wanton slaughter of one another. The Russians and Chinese do it to make their societies more efficient and sequacious; the Arabs do it out of religious fervor. An unwed daughter is suspected of a lascivious tryst with a local dandy, Algeria covets its neighbor's sand dune—whatever the case, the Arab draws his blade with gusto, and when he is finished butchering he is always that much closer to Allah. So Iraqis plot against Syrians, Moroccans intrigue against Algerians, and Libyans scheme against everyone. When the Jordanians moved against the PLO, they did so with a fury that must have appalled even Moshe Dayan. If the Israelis left Israel tomorrow, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, and the PLO would be slitting each other's throats by nightfall, for all have claims to the area.

The religious intolerance of the Arabs is a point that makes them the envy of many an old-time Methodist. Thanks to the seventh-century Covenant of Omar, the devout Muslim can treat the *dhimmi*, or non-Muslim, even more shabbily than he treats his wives. The *dhimmi* is burdened with a dress code somewhat suggestive of the uniform worn in Nazi death camps; he is proscribed from owning a horse, publicly practicing his religion, publicly consorting with demon rum, and publicly mourning his dead. Further, as breaches of the peace go, the murder of a non-Muslim by a Muslim is considered no graver than double parking, and no non-Muslim can testify against a Muslim. Finally, the fortunate *dhimmi* is assessed special taxes for such special treatment. All in all, a notable arrangement; if our Ku Kluxers ever could have heated up the moral fervor that burns within the bosom of the average Muslim, 1920s Boston would have looked like 1970s Beirut; Al Smith would have been dragged around Capitol Hill behind a Model T. Consider how the Egyptians have oppressed the poor Copts. Remember the plight of the harried Kurd in

Iraq. What of the Jew? Of the 900,000 Jews under Arab rule in 1948, only some 35,000 remain today. The only Arab state in the Middle East where religious toleration was attempted was Lebanon. Already more Arab lives have been snuffed out there than in all the wars with Israel. And Lebanon is the model the Arabs have prescribed for Israel once the Israeli government is eliminated.

There is not one Arab democracy in the Middle East. So far as I can tell, there is not even a benign despotism in the area. The Arabs have no sense of individual freedom or civil rights. They have no free press, few political parties, and a labor movement that is as servile to governmental whims as the labor movement of the Soviet Union. Rumors persist that slavery endures in Arab backwaters, but even if these tales are apocryphal the Arab conception of marriage is but one step removed from slavery. The condition of women in Arab society is actually worse than what *Ms.* magazine portrays as existing in the United States. What political philosophy exists amongst the Arabs is distinctly nonliberal. Today the young Arab intellectual spouts the tosh of Lenin. In the Thirties the most celebrated Palestinian leader, the mufti of Jerusalem, became a Nazi, packed up, and moved to Berlin to be closer to the fount of Aryan wisdom. All in all, the Arab, especially the pious Arab, makes a most unpleasant neighbor. The more addicted he is to the Koran, the less apt he is to conform to the idealistic notions of American statesmen. For our goody-goody Machiavellians to spend much time ensnaring such a non-Western, premodern people into a life of reason and dignity is as hopeless as trying to get a laugh out of the eternally sour mug of King Khalid.

Nevertheless, they persist. With a cleverness that is all too transparent they continue to try to dupe barbarians into accepting the truths of Rector Endicott Peabody. Are these the machinations of the world's foremost imperialistic power? Not at all; rather, they are the signs of a rather formidable imperialistic imagination, and many an evening I spend in my chapel beseeching the Deity to save us from our statesmen's fantasies. So far His response has been mixed. □



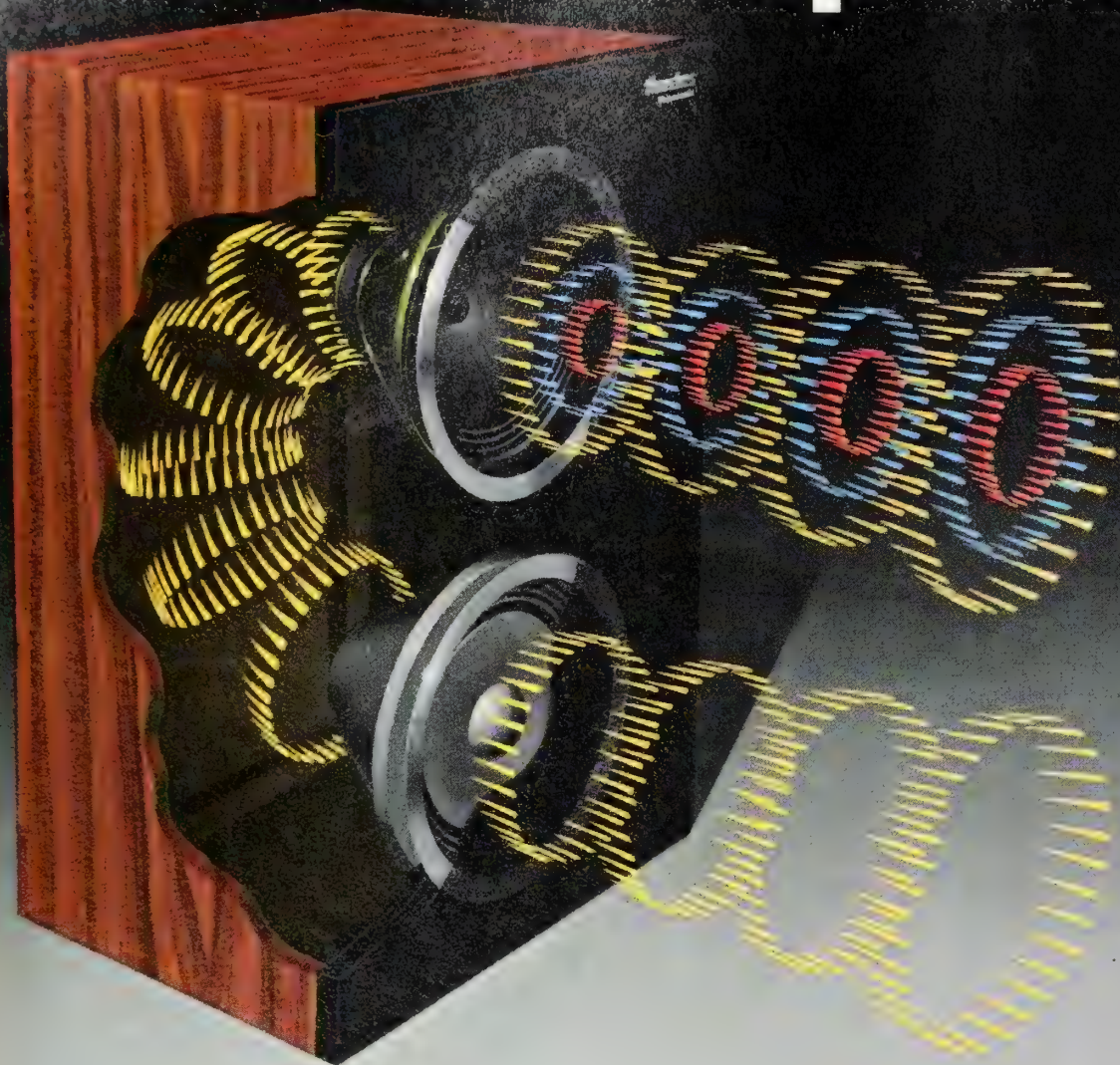
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# BORN-AGAIN REPUBLICANS

by Murray Kempton

An unorthodox appreciation of the Republican National Convention

**T**HOSE OF US LUCKY ENOUGH to be detached from the sufferings of the Republicans were drawn here to an ignoble extent by the promise of watching them let one another's blood. We were cheated, as those all-too-human parts that are instinct with the thirst for gore deserve to be cheated, and we knew we were almost at the first sight of this lowing herd, which anticipation had confused with a bedlam of bulls. For the moment the Republicans have no blood to let; they are drained by the prolonged biting of flies.

They have not been so much gored as galled. They are resentful, of course—and who in their income bracket has a larger claim?—but they have lost count of their resentments. The endurance of their factions is no more than one of those habits that outlive passion. They cannot hate each other as they sometimes used to, being bound in the fraternity of a shared victimhood. Their bitterness is diffused, unfocused, and of that order that brought Vergil to speak of “the tears of

things”; but these are not the *lacrimae* but the *acrimoniae rerum*. If they could give a face to their rancor, it would probably belong to the uneasy ghost at San Clemente, and yet a part of them is tied even to him by the bond of a shared misfortune. Of all the afflictions that have deadened them, the heaviest is the possession of this martyr who is also their cross. He is everywhere and nowhere, the more noticeable in a convention hall barren of any graven image, even Abraham Lincoln's let alone Mr. Ford's. It is as though we have been confronted by a universal will to believe that the Republican Party was founded in Ripon, Wisconsin, sometime in August 1974 and dedicated to the liberation of Washington from generations of misrule by the Democrats. The Republican distaste for government has almost forced them into a compact to forget that, come January, they will have been at the head of government for sixteen of the past twenty-four years. We cannot even be sure that they will not thereafter be cursed by title to the estate they so dislike. They have become the inert party, and the size of the

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inert vote is by now incalculable, since we have no way yet to measure how far their numbness extends to the rest of us.

### Republican semiotics

**M**EANWHILE, IF ONE EMOTION controlled their rounds, it was their ill-concealed mutual goodwill. Our habit of thinking of the Republican party as an arena of quarrel between its conservatives and its moderates went its way even on this scene where the only contention was between two factions of its right wing, one putatively if dubiously purposeful, the other plainly without need of purpose. It would be an altogether easier case if the thing restored itself to the brutal simplicities that governed it before Mr. Nixon, and provided us some banner of the truly committed like the California delegation that former Sen. William Knowland led into the lists for Barry Goldwater in 1964. Knowland was a tower of certainty then, remembered as a somewhat elephantinely graceful man once, but now half-seas-over from the grievance of the lost cause of himself, his every hair standing up from the very electricity of his vehemence, and his troops howling at his back, every man in his orange jump suit as though made ready for whatever befell from the creeps, the Commies, and the epicene snobs, and dressed so as to make each good American identifiable to every other in the melee. But here there was no symbol to suggest the fanatic heart except the red celluloid cowboy hats of the unanimous Reagan delegation from Texas. Only an aisle separated them from the New York delegation and Richard Rosenbaum, that state's Republican chairman and Vice-President Rockefeller's whipper-in charged with holding its pack to Mr. Ford. That cannot have been a cause commanding the utmost from Rosenbaum's spiritual fervor, since his own great principal had been treated with extreme shabbiness by the President. Yet here was one of those men who, if he cannot love those he serves, all the same exults in the crudities and cruelties of the service. Rosenbaum strode his beat like some rogue cop, bullying the poor huddle of Reaganites in his captivity, his rasping voice and hairless head the incarnation of the pitiless and terrible authority that cares not for whose sake it asserts so long as it can assert itself. There was a time whose passing it would be ridiculous to mourn when Texans of rightward cast knew how to hate, and the sight of Rosenbaum in the bloom of his frenzy would have excited

extremes of nativist bigotry toward any such offering from what Governor Carter has called the heritage and Mr. Ford the treasury of our ethnicity. But, as things were now, when Rosenbaum's polished skull rose and shone with a special arrogance, the most aroused of Texans could summon up no cry of protest beyond an almost complicit "Sit down, skinhead." On the convention's final night, Rosenbaum was carrying a Texas hat, the parting gift, no doubt, of these new friends, his enemies. There are no second acts for the politics of the *enragé* in American life.

**N**ATURALLY, THEN, the quarrel over the soul of this party we had come to think of as endemically diseased by the bad blood of its amateurs was a contest between mercenaries, exhausted in the case of Mr. Ford's subalterns and quick with the rakish energies of youth only in that of John Sears, Governor Reagan's master of the horse. Mr. Ford is, one supposes, the Eternal Husband, and the array of his campaign servitors ran to old stagers who had collapsed into his arms, their great loves forever lost to them. There was Harry Dent of South Carolina, who had first come to notice as a junior flugelman for the Dixiecrats in 1948; there was William Timmons, last seen as chief whip of Mr. Nixon's resistance to impeachment by the House of Representatives, a masterpiece of tactics that worked its way down from a garrison of 200-odd loyalists to a cadre of 25; there was Clifton White, who had been Goldwater's chief master of ceremonies and of delegates; there was Sen. John Tower, who had been his convention floor manager; there was Dean Burch, who had directed his campaign; and there was Goldwater himself, who had never been much of a Goldwaterite and had a while ago muddled his convictions into a general fraternal benevolence. Their days are in the yellow leaf, and their history even when they were in the green is so dismal a logbook of pilings up on rocks as to exclude them by definition from any suspicion of bare competence; but they brought the ship home this time and were universally hailed for the dexterity of their address in clutching a desperate victory from what ought not ever to have been a battle. The affairs of the Republicans belong by now more to paleontology than to any politics familiar to us; we do not lard the Cretaceous period with compliments for having outworn the Jurassic. But if for Acton there was no worse heresy than that the office sanctifies the holder of it, there is for journalism no credo more sacred



than that victory, however seedy, certifies the brilliance of the victor.

In the fortunate defection of their tribal chiefs, the Goldwaterites had turned to John Sears, a *condottiere* who was a stranger even to Governor Reagan. As the faction appointed to represent moderation was staffed and led by these depleted veterans of a Republican campaign whose defeat is generally blamed upon its extremism, the faction deemed extremist was directed by the former chairman of Students for Kennedy at Notre Dame University. John Sears had gone on to further his political apprenticeship as a junior in the law firm that somehow sits in the memory as Nixon, Mudge, Grudge, Nasty, Brutish and Short. Mr. Nixon may well have had John Sears in mind as exemplary pupil when he used to say in those days, "I tell the young men around me that politics is nothing unless it is also poetry." His addiction to flourishes of nonsense like that is one of several encouragements to forgetting that Mr. Nixon had a very long head for the business of any politician except himself and could therefore have been that best of instructors, the one at once informed enough to teach the acquired wisdom of his discipline and deformed enough to be a useful warning against its follies. This least lyrical and most prosy of artisans may even have been on to something in his fantasy of a politics that is nothing unless it is also poetry. Politics does occasionally attain poetic occasions; but they run to just the ones that persons most serious about success ought most earnestly to avoid, being limited as they are to what Apollinaire had in mind when he wrote that there is a poem in the bird that has but one wing.

Governor Reagan was just that species of bird. It is hard otherwise to see what could have brought John Sears to him. There had, to be sure, subsequently grown between them a bond as unmistakable and as mysterious as the one that might, in the best of cases, tie trainer to horse to trainer. It was nonetheless an incongruity to find the most unremittingly incantatory ideologue in our politics giving all his trust to a campaign manager who never ceased to insist that this was not an ideological year. There was in the sight of Sears at work all the puzzlement and the final admiration that would attend any agnostic masterfully captaining some army of the faithful, now and again lighting up the solemnities of its march with his drolleries, and making it altogether clear that the continually refreshed impulse of his employment had been his delight in the game as game.

**I**T MUST BE SAID FOR Governor Reagan that he was a horse worthy of such a trainer. He deserves, when you consider the weight assigned, to be counted as one of the great candidates in our memory, perhaps the greatest who never got his chance. As it was, he finished the primaries with more votes from Republicans than a President who, however dim otherwise, was their own and who had the support of all such paladins, however reduced in fortune, as are left for them to revere. Reagan rode over Goldwater in Arizona, in Texas reduced John Connally to an unwonted silence, and, if Sears had not, in this one instance, underestimated his proportions, might conceivably have added to the load of Rockefeller's embarrassments if he had chosen to challenge in New York.

His gifts were the actor's, some native and others, no less formidable, acquired in the craft. It was not merely that no one who had ever taken the field against him could be Reagan's equal at telling a story, providing, as Shaw said of Shakespeare, that someone else had told it to him first, or that he could suggest that fluoridation induces hair on the palms of the hands and maintain a tone pregnant with common sense. That his talents as an actor had always been of the respectable rather than the transforming sort added significantly to his dimensions as a candidate. Modest talents learn to be modest, since their survival depends upon the subordination of their temperament. Ronald Reagan, when young, had grown used to doing what his director, his producer, and, beyond all others, his agent told him was best for him. If he had not, he would have been forgotten long since. In the

**"Mr. Ford is the Eternal Husband, and the array of his campaign servitors ran to old stagers who had collapsed into his arms, their great loves forever lost to them."**





Forties he lost his bloom just at the awful moment when Hollywood was losing its. Taft Schreiber of the Music Corporation of America was his agent then, and nearly twenty-five years later he could still speak with reverence of the noble fashion with which Reagan pulled down vanity.

"Bigger performers than he were in the same trouble he was," Schreiber remembered. "All they did was complain that we didn't get them parts. They couldn't understand that movies had stopped being made in those days. But Ron would do anything. I think he would have put on a clown suit and helped open a shopping center if we'd suggested it. We finally got him work speaking at General Electric sales meetings. He had only started when we got a letter from GE saying that one of the dealers had complained about some wisecrack Ron had made. I thought that was pretty insulting for a performer of his stature; but I thought I ought to show him the letter. And do you know that Ron picked up the phone and called GE and told them that he was glad they had told this to him. He said that this was a new job, and he knew he would make mistakes, and he was working for GE now, and that he'd be helped and not hurt by being told what it wanted."

He was not sunk but had only dived and would yet get up again. This habit of being pliable won Reagan a campaign that ought to be remembered as one of the epics of our politics. For what are epics about, after all, except how this man or that one played out a bad hand? He had begun in the East, mild as milk, and failed, although narrowly; after Illinois, all seemed up with him. He fell boldly back upon those tested untruths that bad memory transforms into verities—the enemy with his talons at our jugular, the Panama Canal as holy ground—and he went through the West like a devouring flame. He was once again in being as a candidate; a lesser man with a lesser agent would have been intoxicated by principles not only cherished for themselves but so lately proven in the service of his recovery, and would have gone on trusting them and would have expired with increasingly hoarse and decreasingly attended preachments against the Mongol horde. But it was the peculiar element of Reagan's genius that he would yield any trust in his own convictions to his higher trust in his agent. Sears had divined that what had brought them to Mr. Ford's very gate was not enough to carry them through and that no hope remained unless the troops of the committed could be reinforced from the dwelling places of the calculating. He set to scouring the countryside, returned with Senator Richard Schweiker of

Pennsylvania, and introduced this most bizarre trophy to Reagan as his Vice-President-designate. It was a piece of superb impudence; the smell of heresy to stern Republican principles that the orthodox had so long sniffed in their Eastern dioceses was a stench of sulphur on Schweiker. While Rockefeller groaned for pardon of his seldom-ardent and long-ago-re-nounced traffickings with the liberals, Schweiker was writhing unashamedly at their orgies. His votes in the Senate could be seen to deviate from the desires of George Meany only when they had given precedence to some contrary wish of the Americans for Democratic Action. There is no telling how far Sears had worked his way through the muster roll of the enemy's camp before having resort to any prospect as seemingly unpromising as Schweiker; he might well have turned to him early on the sound premise that the likeliest deserter is the trooper with some prior experience of absences without leave. Schweiker defected with an alacrity hardly more decent than his voting record and seems already to have been the chosen vessel when he was borne to Reagan for inspection. Their first meeting is said to have consumed five hours and distilled a broad agreement that hearths ought to be warm and homes proof against termites. Schweiker is a fair-seeming fellow with one of those orator-on-the-windy-hilltop faces that would have impressed Vachel Lindsay for at least a minute-and-a-half; but, all the same, Reagan's occasional lapses in identifying this brand that had leaped to him from the burning suggested a probe of the smallest degree of intimacy. But then to work overmuch to contrive the pretense that such an alliance could have the remotest connection with the logic of the convictions of either of these comrades-in-arms would have spoiled the symmetry of a gesture whose entire point was to give proof of Reagan's readiness to cast off his principles at need. His progress had been halted at its final barrier by the fears of the prudent that he was overprincipled, the terror of another Goldwater campaign having driven even Goldwater to Mr. Ford's standard.

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#### A change in doctrine

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**A**ND SO REAGAN RAISED HIMSELF for one final demonstration that he was capable of as many roles as there are sins to commit. As he had begun sectarian, he ended ecumenical. When the faithful gathered to welcome him to Kansas City and the final conflict, they found him preaching the same heresies that he and they



had stood together so long to extirpate.

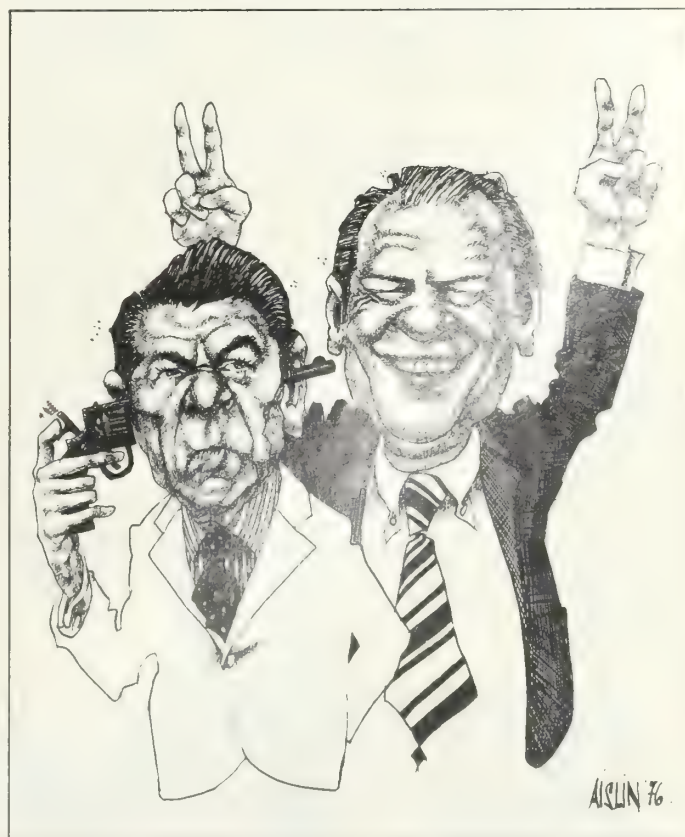
"I got in this," he said, "to win an election." For all too long, the Northeastern Republicans had felt abused and scorned and traduced. "It was time to reach our hands across the border," and that was what he alone had been bold enough to do. And there in the sun, with the balloons bobbing on the hills around the Alameda-Plaza Hotel, the young mothers held up their children to see Schweiker, who, had they known of his existence a month ago, could only have imagined him as a sight fit to turn any innocent gazer to stone. Their devotion to Reagan had begun with their antipathy to all the Schweikers of this earth; and now they listened to a lament over the wounds of the Eastern Republicans that they themselves had gloried in inflicting, and they accepted with cheerful complacency the honors due them as the saviors of their own victims. When Mr. Nixon reached out his hand to Mao Tse-tung, he knew his audience. It is foolish to think of the Republican party as an institution that will not endure to Judgment; it is protected by its own imperviousness to every irony.

The stroke was no less masterful for having made no difference. Schweiker brought no delegates with him, and Reagan lost none that he already possessed, except a few from Mississippi who would have found some other excuse to desert him soon enough. There arrives a time in these affairs when the lines are drawn beyond assail by so weak a force as reason. The generic Reaganite, being principled, could no more be disillusioned at seeing his principles mocked by their appointed champion than the generic Fordite, being realistic, could be seduced by any appeal, however shrewd, to his bent for the practical.

But John Sears cannot have expected much from any device of his by then. He could do no more than come up with the best that was left. His campaign had been notable for the acuity of its anticipation of the moment when the vein it was mining would be tapped out. There now remained to him nothing except to display Reagan to the professionals as a candidate even more anxious to win than they, even quicker to sacrifice fantasies of honor and in every way more venturesome and readier to dare all. But to appreciate the promise of qualities of that distinguished order required imagination at its keenest pitch; Sears must have known that his case was terminally desperate when he understood that it had no hopes of salvage unless it could arouse the imagination of a party rendered by dreadful circumstance incapable of imagining anything except some fresh horror.

**S**TILL AND ALL, when the convention entered upon its formalities, there were eighty or so delegates still confessing themselves unable to choose between the two candidates. Their mystery was the only prop to the fiction that the game was not up. It was widely thought that, having led obscure lives, they were only indulging the itch to stay conspicuous as long as they could. And yet the attention paid them seemed more an embarrassment than a gratification, for they were Republicans and, as members of the party of order, unable to go their way unconscious of the sin of having lapsed into being an occasion for uncertainty. They ran to a marked degree to persons whose hope for rescue abided now in the intervention of some supernatural agent: there passed in view the Congressman from Denver who called a press conference to announce that that afternoon he was going on his knees to pray the Almighty's counsel, the lady from Mississippi who said she was waiting for a vision, and the spiritualist from Virginia who felt that she could at last relax because she had ordered up a dream for that very evening; by then it had come to seem that victory might well belong to the faction with the wit to fix the horoscope in Wednesday afternoon's *Kansas City Star*. Most of these devotees of various competitive powers and principalities of the air ended up in Mr. Ford's custody; but then, if one is a Republican and summons the Angel of God, He can, I suppose, be trusted to arrive terrible in His

**"Mr. Nixon was that best of instructors, the one at once informed enough to teach the acquired wisdom of his discipline and deformed enough to be a useful warning against its follies."**





majesty and deliver the injunction "Always keep a-hold of Nurse/For fear of finding something worse."

By now John Sears was left with only two instruments that might provide for him some plausible diversion from the counterrevolutionary bias that seems to be common to all messages from the Other Shore.

One was a proposal that the convention revise its rules to require any candidate for President to designate his choice for Vice-President the morning before the night he submits himself to the mercy of the delegates. That had been Sears's idea. The other was an amendment to the platform which, under the guise of a pledge to "morality in foreign policy" was a litany of the perfidies of a Secretary of State who had been named as the most admired American the last time the Gallup firm dared to test the proposition that there might be one, and who was here rent limb from limb by the exaltation of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, whom he had snubbed, and the denunciation of the Helsinki agreement, which he had sponsored. That had been the concoction of the more ferocious tribes around Reagan's campfires. Sears seems to have regarded it as of little purpose except for sport; and, when he was asked why the amendment did not content itself with a simple "Bring me the head of Henry Kissinger," his interior laughter seemed almost loud enough to be heard; he rolled his tongue about his cheek and made a protracted show of studying the document at hand and emerging to report that nowhere upon the page had he been able to find the name of Secretary Kissinger.

He clearly regarded all such wrestlings with the cosmos as irrelevant in a politics whose ultimate struggles are not over ideas but property, and are decided on matters of procedure rather than ideology. To force Mr. Ford to name his Vice-President and create one future ingrate and a dozen enemies would be to weaken Mr. Ford, while to have his own party abuse his foreign policy would do no more than insult a dignity that had long ago surrendered itself in supplications to ladies from Mississippi who, while they were waiting for their vision, would as lief pass the time with the President of the United States as with any other mortal.

**T**HE CHALLENGE TO REFORM the Vice-Presidential selection process had more definitive promise as a weapon and even some modest merit as a proposition. Here, after all, was a party that

had seen both its Vice-Presidents of the past twenty-four years end up as putative coconspirators on felony indictment sheets. Even though a candidate for President could hardly be more perceptive in his blunderings toward the choice of a running mate while distracted by the imminence of the convention than while exhausted after it, he could certainly not be less so; and, given the record, even the most languid wave in the direction of reform might be taken as a minimally decent show of conscience.

Mr. Ford's majority on the rules committee had rejected Sears's proposal even so; it would come to the convention floor only as a minority report on the second night of the convention. Sears met the journalists at noon of the evening of this last go at the tables with his gaiety undiminished. It would, he promised them, be one of the most exciting nights in history. He must have known that it was all up with him; it had been twenty-four hours since he had been able to take note of the emergence of a closet Reaganite; he had instead taken to speaking of forty or fifty delegates that were his and that no one had counted as his because they preferred to reveal themselves on the floor. He moved through these fancies with an air of such careless assurance—as of one so rich that he no longer bothers to count his fortune—that the bare rumor of him must have sent Mr. Ford's captains to a frantic recanvass of figures whose accuracy he perfectly appreciated but whose dubiety he managed alarmingly to suggest on no evidence except his manner.

He was asked about Mississippi, whose thirty delegates had made their entrance marked as movers and shakers and had met that challenge by collapsing into a midden of intermingled and shuddering flesh from which no signal came more coherent than now a moan and then a lamentation. Sears affected to have stopped thinking about Mississippi except with the sympathy for the unfortunate that noblesse oblige:

"That delegation is full of gentlemen I have known for many years. In all this excitement, if one more question is asked of them, these people will drop dead of fatigue."

His impulse to mischief had carried him one half-step too far; a campaign manager, no matter how ample his graces, cannot say that it would be indelicate of him to intrude upon the prayer and fasting of the troubled without suggesting that he knows by now that it would be an intrusion without hope. By now, some sense of injury was arising among the journalists. A serious man does not like to think of his business as trivial; and how to go on affirm-



ing the importance of this tapestry when the faces of the defeated showed themselves so all else but suffering?

"How about some *real* figures," one of us growled.

"There will be real figures tonight," John Sears answered, and with more bitterness seated in their ranks than they had before known with this droll companion, the journalists trailed away. And yet he had only said, gentlemen, the dice will be on the table this evening, and, although I concede that thirteen is not the easiest of all points to make, we propose to have our throw. It was difficult not to feel a little ashamed of us; but it is not easy to be better than one's circumstances; and given the debasement of the playing level of politics—even hockey is no more inept—it was inevitable that some practitioner with a feel for the art would appear by chance and there would come a moment in the course of one of his disquisitions when we would know how things might have gone if Mozart had submitted himself to the inquiries of a convention of country-and-western-music editors in Nashville, Tennessee.

That afternoon, there was manifested in the pressroom the agenda for the night's great debate. The climactic confrontation over the soul of the Republican party was identified as one of "two and only two amendments" to the platform, "which are in order: fwo. Insert morality in foreign-affairs language. Ten minutes pro and con."

Giants would stalk among us. The question: "Resolved, that our Secretary of State is the scourge of our friends and the solace of our enemies" would be put by "R. Obenshein, Virginia; J. Baxter, Delaware; L. Leonard, West Virginia; Congressman P. Crane, Illinois." The reply in the Crown's name would be given by "Sen. R. Hruska, Nebraska."

But long before then the proposed rule to force Mr. Ford to confess whatever shabby disposition he proposed to make of the Vice-Presidency of the United States would run its murdles and the matter of the property would have been for all realistic purposes settled.

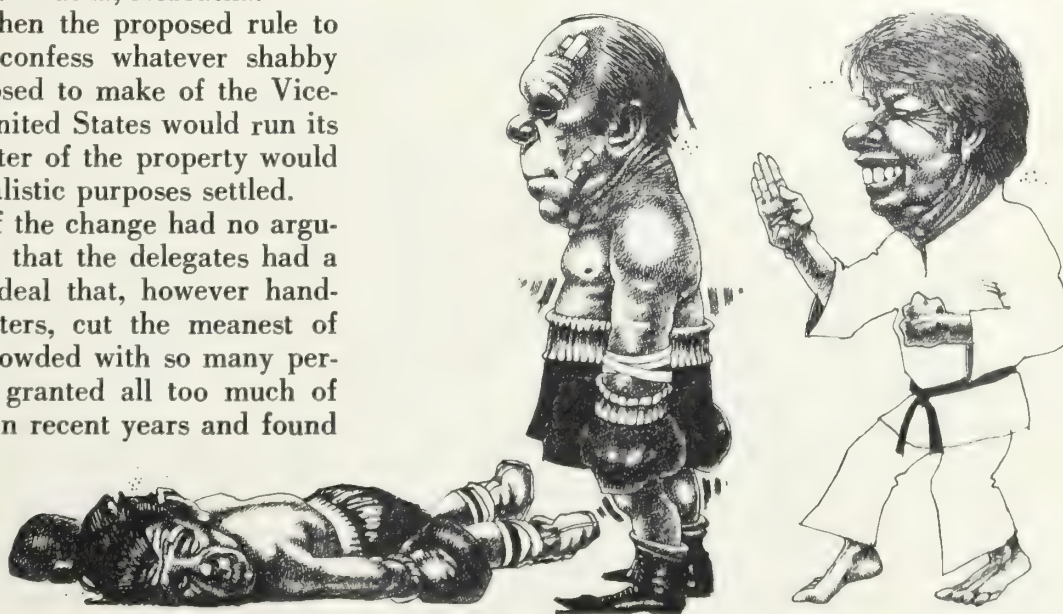
The proponents of the change had no argument to offer except that the delegates had a right to know, an ideal that, however handsome in other quarters, cut the meanest of figures on a floor crowded with so many persons who had been granted all too much of their right to know in recent years and found

it invariably accompanied by the nastiest of shocks. Its opponents barely argued at all and would have been unheard if they had; the delegates had ceased all attention to the podium, having been distracted by Vice-President Rockefeller, by now consumed by his role as aging pantaloons fallen from notice and remembering that his most infrequent moments of grandeur at Republican conventions had been confined to those occasions when he was able to shine forth as their victim, and bent upon restoring his importance by rousing the beast that slumbered around him. A North Carolina delegate teased him with a Reagan sign, and gratefully the Vice-President snatched and made away with it. A Utah delegate retaliated by ripping Richard Rosenbaum's telephone from its moorings. While these buffooneries rolled forward, Sherry Shealy Martschink, South Carolina's rules committeewoman, did her plaintive best to set forth her objections to any change in the sacred rite of Vice-Presidential selection.

"Take Checkers," she began. There was no noticeable flinching; all the week's elaborate precautions against disturbing the peace of this house of the hangman with infelicities about ropes had been superfluous after all. "Take checkers," Mrs. Martschink proceeded. "In checkers, we decide on the rules before we start the game. I am in favor of change, in 1980—not in the middle of the game." The major debate of the convention of the great party that has ruled the air above and the earth below us through two-thirds of the lifetime of any American twenty-four years of age had taken full flight from reason and reality.

No one thought to make the point that the game had not started, and the writing of the

**"Mr. Ford reminds us of Kafka's image of the candidate about whom it was no longer possible to tell whether he was outlining his program or crying for help."**



AISLIN 76.



rules before it did was the exact subject on the agenda. And no one pointed to the Vice-President waving about his martyred telephone on the floor and doing his best to add to the crimes that stain the memory of recent American Vice-Presidents the especially baroque one of inciting to riot. The case for sober consideration of improvements in the standards of Vice-Presidential selection could rest on the solitary exhibit of that office's incumbent ornament at his revels. But then, what matters the argument if the vote be lost, as lost it was? Mr. Ford had at least fifty votes more than he needed for nomination; there was nothing left but sullen resignation. What with the snuffings over the investiture of Rep. John Rhodes as permanent chairman, the platform could not be served up until midnight and it was 1:30 in the morning before the proposal "Insert morality in foreign-affairs language" could claim the floor. By then, Mr. Ford's managers would have seen Henry Kissinger hanging from the highest beam before flogging these drooping spirits through yet another roll call, from whose torments they could wake only to howl for vengeance; it was quickly announced that Mr. Ford had accepted the amendment, and it took its place in the Republican platform of 1976, which gained from it, in fact, an improved artistic unity, because there had been needed only this warning against spiritual wickedness in high places to make complete the impression it conveyed that, for the past eight years, the country had been governed by a myriad of faceless scoundrels whose infamies oppressed every decent Republican nostril. The dismembered limbs of the Secretary of State were left to reappear miraculously sewn together and sitting in the seats reserved for important guests two nights later when Mr. Ford was safely home.

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### The suppliant candidate

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**T**HE SPEECH MR. FORD MADE in accepting his prize was generally accounted a rouser. I suppose it may be thought such if we compare it only with his others; he remains a long way from ceasing to remind us of Kafka's image of the candidate about whom it was no longer possible to tell whether he was outlining his program or crying for help. When he had finished, he made an imploring gesture to the Reagans to join him on the platform, and they made their way there so graciously that the desperation of the President's entreaty seemed entirely unnecessary. But then, having been reduced to beggary in the extremity of his ordeal, he may

have become a beggar by habit; and we may never see him again except pleading, when he need only invite. He fills the mind with the sense of how ordinary he is and how vulnerable, with his wife and children to worry about, and so little capital that he even pays almost his fair share of his taxes, and us not all that certain that he is even employable. He impels you to think of the vote, so otherwise unserviceable, as at least of some use as a hand-out. We may have been brought by the distortions worked by the urge to be great upon the characters of so many who came before him to an exhaustion where we can hardly conceive of believing again in a President we dare think of ourselves as needing; if Mr. Ford survives, it will be because he is so patently a President who needs us.

Mr. Ford wondered in his abject way whether Governor Reagan might have something to say. The governor talked about how honored he and Mrs. Reagan were by the President's generosity and kindness in bringing them here this last time; he had given them a memory that would live in their hearts forever. And then he took wing. He remembered that he had been asked to compose a letter that would be encased in a time capsule to be opened in Los Angeles 100 years from now.

"We live in a world," it had occurred to him, "in which the great powers have poised and aimed at each other horrible missiles of destruction. . . . And suddenly it dawned on me, those who would read this letter 100 years from now will know if those missiles had been fired. They will know whether we met our challenge."

And there could suddenly be felt the assault of the awe of the thought that, meaning no offense to the speaker, only the votes of 117 inert and unknown strangers had saved us from being fooled once more. The Republicans had begun to weep, the Reaganites mostly, of course, weeping not for the loss of a nomination but for the loss of their chance to be fooled again, for the departure of the last object of unreasonable faith they could expect ever to know. After us, the worthy clod. Even John Sears was seen to weep. He will be old and gray and remember a dozen other candidates, some of them successful, but none like this one. He had gone through his one grand passion; he would never again travel with that high heart on the quest for the Absolute. You felt his bereavement like an ache; for here had passed an artist who would never come this way in this form again. There was, however, a considerable measure of relief to go with the regret; the Quest for the Absolute is a damnable piece of mischief. □



# REQUIEM FOR THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Empty  
voices  
in  
crowded  
rooms

by Veronica Geng

HERE IS A manila folder full of clippings from this summer's *New York Times*. These clippings soothingly imply some kind of progressive context within which women are becoming "liberated." They are boring, and the reason for this is that boredom—which feels very much like helplessness—is a form of anxiety, a covert way of saying no to lies. These clippings are full of lies.

This is not to say that the truth behind "Miss Hart Named Head of Federal Reserve Unit" is "Miss Hart *Not* Named Head of Federal Reserve Unit"—only that there are too many Miss Harts not named heads of anything. Such stories are about what

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feminists call the token woman. That's an unfortunate phrase, for it seems to disparage the woman; but it is accurate in suggesting that she is being used as a medium of exchange. We'll give you a "first woman ever appointed head of a division at the Federal Reserve" if you'll get off our backs about women's rights. Token-woman stories are boring because they falsify the reader's experience.

Here is a story about an academic study showing that men do better than women at mathematics for "societal," not genetic, reasons. Stop the presses! Still, the study's report ought to be cheering as scientific confirmation of what right-thinking people wish to believe. The report is not cheering. It is tedious and depressing:

*The immorality of these sex differences lies precisely in the fact that they are the result of so many subtle and not so subtle forces, restrictions, stereotypes, sex roles, parental-teacher-peer group attitudes, and other cultural and psychological constraints which we haven't begun to fully understand.*

This seemingly enlightened analysis is a fraud. Its vague, passive jargon pins the responsibility for bad treatment of women on amorphous "roles" and "forces," which, unlike human beings, are not accountable to anybody. In places, the report sounds as if the culprit is mathematics itself:

*Mathematics is a "critical filter" tending to eliminate women from many fields. . . . [New] approaches . . . might prove useful in making the subject less forbidding to women.*

Men, not mathematics, are "tending to eliminate women from many fields" and are "forbidding to women." The report, unable to fight entirely clear of specifics, suggests this in the most reluctant way:

*The study found that, beginning in the sixth grade the father becomes the "authority" on mathematics and continues this role through high school. "This fact alone must have a subtle influence on a young girl's or boy's attitude," the study said.*

"Advanced Thinkers Find Women Brainwashed by Stereotypes" is probably the most common type of "women's liberation" news. Its fraudulence is not just a matter of trivial linguistic muddle that smart people will penetrate. It tells two big lies, which appear to be almost universally believed. First, it says that the problem is so awesomely complex and due to such obscure "forces" that even with the best will in the world we won't be able to understand it, let alone solve it, for goodness knows how long. This certainly takes the heat off daddies and male teachers. Second, it says that these crippling "forces" are all that stand between women

and job equality; when the "forces" are conquered and a new, uncrippled generation of women gets an equal education in, say, mathematics, they will naturally find equal employment as physicists and engineers. In fact, equal education gives women no job equality whatever. The median income for women with four or more years of college is about \$1,600 lower than that for men with no college at all.

Finally, here, from the Family/Style page of the *Times*, is the kind of story that is supposed to reveal the "light" side of women's liberation. It is dreary beyond belief. Hanes Hosiery hired Jacqui Ceballos, former head of the New York City chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and now a partner in her own public-relations business, to promote Hanes's "latest liberating product"—a new kind of pantyhose. Ceballos rose to the occasion with a fashion show, "From Revolution to Revolution: The Undercover Story"—described by the *Times* as "a commentary, of sorts, on the politics of underwear" and an example of "good, old, flannel feminism." The guests included NOW officers, *Ms.* magazine editors, the director of the New York State Women's Division, and an officer of the Women's Bank, many of whom described to the press their preferences in underwear.

This phony affair has nothing to do with feminism except as it illustrates the extent to which manufacturers will debase the word "liberating" by attaching it to whatever they happen to be manufacturing, and the extent to which so-called feminist leaders will help them do it.

Around the time of the Great Underwear Caucus, a New York feminist told me a story that puts hosiery in perspective.

*People forget that there are things we have fought for and achieved that didn't come easy and that we all enjoy—and that can be taken away at any time if we don't remember how we got them. I work in a place where we never had to wear nylon stockings. We could wear sandals with bare feet, or socks, or whatever. Suddenly we got a new, repressive regime in, and they said we must wear stockings. At first, everybody was up in arms, and then the flame died down. Now, from all those people who, when they were free, never wore stockings, suddenly I'm hearing that they feel better wearing stockings. I have to keep reminding them that they might feel better not having to fight, or not losing their jobs, but they don't feel better wearing stockings. You can't lie about it. Every morning I have to come in and say, I can't stand it! It's so hot! These damn stockings!*

Real feminist leaders would be addressing themselves, not to improvements on the stocking, but to ways of getting women to stop denying the evidence of their senses.



## POSITIVE THINKING

THE WISHFUL THINKING IN these newspaper stories is remarkable. In a *Times* book review of the same vintage, summer 1976, Anatole Broyard referred to "the feminist insistence on the power of positive thinking." But positive thinking has always been the mental process behind antifeminism, with its eternal dodges and reassurances: the status of women is natural, and women need only learn to enjoy it; the status of women is improving, and women need only cease from fuss. Positive thinking is wheeled out, not in the worst of times, when inequitable relations between the sexes go unquestioned, but in times when something better can be imagined. It was ancient Rome, where women had considerable but by no means complete freedom, that made a heroine of Arria. This positive-thinking woman beckoned her husband to a gentlemanly way out of his troubles with the authorities by stabbing herself, and saying, "It does not hurt." It was Rome, as well, that heard Cato's fatuous claim "We who govern all men are ourselves governed by our women." Arria was a fanatical sister of the women who sweat around in pantyhose, swearing they feel great. And Cato would be at home on the *New York Times*, where he could write stories that lie about the "liberation" of women today.

From time to time, individuals have refused this kind of "positive thinking" and have tried to persuade others that the subjection of women is unjust. The most recent of these attempts in America—the new feminism—has its immediate origins in the thinking of two women: Betty Friedan and Simone de Beauvoir.

In 1963 Friedan published *The Feminine Mystique*, a book about a "problem that has no name." She described the transformation of the New Woman of the Thirties and Forties into a zombie housewife who let herself be shunted into the "comfortable concentration camp" of suburbia: "For the feminine mystique to have brainwashed American women of nonsexual human purposes for more than fifteen years, it must have filled real needs." Those needs, wrote Friedan, were created by "powerful forces," or "our culture."

In 1966 Friedan and about fifteen others, whom she calls "high-powered, high-salaried women," started NOW, and Friedan was its first president. NOW's Statement of Purpose described it as a "civil rights" group made up of men and women; its reiteration of the phrase "partnership with men" verged on the obsessive. Friedan, in effect, founded a new women's rights movement, which emphasized lobbying, electoral politics, and education for women, and the benefit of the doubt for men.

The imported mother of the new feminism, Simone de Beauvoir, had been at it for much longer, but her influence was not widely felt in this country until *The Second Sex* (1948) came out here in paperback in 1961. Friedan's book acknowledged de Beauvoir's "insights into French women," but chose to present American women with a "problem that has no name," or a problem that has a not very good name—"feminine mystique"—instead of a problem with the vivid and particular name that de Beauvoir had given it: the historic domination of women by men:

*From humanity's beginnings, their biological advantage has enabled the males to affirm their status. . . . Condemned to play the part of the Other, woman was also condemned to hold only uncertain power: slave or idol, it was never she who chose her lot.*

De Beauvoir refused to write the kind of squinting polemic that issued from many of her followers, but she also refused to equate complexity with bleary sociological generalizations:

*The innumerable conflicts that set men and women against one another come from the fact that neither is prepared to assume all the consequences of this situation which one has offered and the other accepted. . . . Once again it is useless to apportion blame and excuses; justice can never be done in the midst of injustice. A colonial administrator has no possibility of acting rightly toward the natives, nor a general toward his soldiers; the only solution is to be neither colonist nor military chief; but a man could not prevent himself from being a man. So there he is, culpable in spite of himself and laboring under the effects of a fault he did not commit; and here she is, victim and shrew in spite of herself.*

Nor did de Beauvoir expect that men and women could solve this problem by joining hands in a civil-rights movement: "oppressors cannot be expected to make a move of gratuitous generosity." She talked about "the revolt of the oppressed" and a future in which "new relations of flesh and sentiment of which we have no conception will arise between the sexes."

During the 1960s, many young women who were working in the black movement and the New Left were



deeply affected by *The Second Sex*, finding in it what they could never have found in Friedan, because it is not there: a political analysis of the status of women—that is, an analysis in terms of power. As early as 1964 some of them had been meeting in what they called women's liberation groups\* to discuss their male colleagues and boyfriends, whose vision of social justice did not include the spectacle of "chicks" as leaders in a movement for social justice.

By 1967 these women were describing themselves as "radical feminists." The "radical" meant two things: that their feminism was part of the new politics of the Sixties, and that it would go deeper than reform, as deep as the roots of inequality they had read about in de Beauvoir. Following the black-power model, they excluded men from their women's liberation groups (though they deplored the ladies' auxiliaries in which women so often worked for other causes, and sexual separatism had not crossed their minds). They also had an idea that their conversations, feelings, and theories about men and women—especially in connection with such "personal" subjects as sex, beauty, their families—were somehow going to be very important as the basis for action, as a way of reaching other women, and as clues to de Beauvoir's "new relations of flesh and sentiment." *The Second Sex*, wrote one of these women, Roxanne Dunbar, "changed our lives."

During the late Sixties and early Seventies, the reformers, daughters of Friedan, and the radicals, daughters of de Beauvoir, accomplished a great deal: reforms in abortion and rape laws, sexual desegregation of job ads, and the like. They did not always agree, but the differences between them felt more like a division of labor than a rift. "We must admit," wrote Ellen Willis, a founder of the radical feminist Redstockings, "that we will often have more in common with reformist women's organizations like NOW... than with radical men. Repeal of abortion laws, for example, is not a radical demand—the system can accommodate it. But it is of gut concern to radical as well as liberal women."

The radicals also generated a larger sense of movement. Their organizing technique—small "consciousness-raising" groups based on the idea that "the personal is political"—appealed to many women who might have felt inconsequential at a meeting run by *Robert's Rules of Order*. Like the best organizing techniques, this one made efficient new use of habits and familiar institutions—the coffee klatsch and hen session.\*\* The

radicals' "zap actions," like the Miss America protest, were also efficient. They worked like metaphors, asserting feminist principles in the most economical, concrete way. They made better news copy, provoked more living-room arguments, and drew more women into organized and unorganized feminism than any number of position papers. They were consciousness-raising at large.

Buoyed by the optimism and energy generated in the Sixties, radical feminism carried along many of us—for we had begun to think of feminists as "us"—who never joined either a radical organization or NOW. Radical feminism—and this still surprises people who misunderstand "radical"—did not ask us to start by getting out on any barricades. It asked us to think, to talk to other women, and to tell the truth, even if we weren't prepared to act on it. Papers about consciousness-raising (CR) were passed along and reprinted in the new feminist press. Many of us started our own CR groups, or found ourselves in ones that had spun off from organizations we knew nothing about. Ruth Adams Bronz, who joined a CR group in New York in 1971, never knew if an organization sponsored it, and never cared. She was paying more attention to what she perceived as a "groundswell."

*That's exactly what it felt like, as if something was moving under my feet, between 1968 and 1971. I am always the last person to do something about something, and for me to get involved in a CR group meant, boy, there had to be a lot of pressure.*

*It was so politically valuable because there was almost nothing said that wasn't in our minds potentially translatable into action. It was assumed that what we were doing had the same importance as if we were in a political meeting. None of us was there to pursue what I can only describe as happiness. We were not even there for quote-fulfillment-unquote. When someone was sinking into a morass of self-pity, we were all capable of saying, "That's not what we're here for—this is what we're here for." Even though none of us had fully defined what the "this" was.*

The "this" was the belief that change could be had if people got together and declared that they wanted it.

\* The first of these was led by Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, a founder of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, for SNCC women in Mississippi.

\*\* Consciousness-raising was originated by New York radical feminists Kathie Sarachild and Ann Forer in 1968, and the theory behind it was developed in Carol Hanisch's paper "The Personal Is Political."

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SOMETIME IN 1975 I NOTICED that I was calling feminists "them." I was as horrified by this as organized feminists were by what



they called "splits" in the movement. The feminist press was full of worried articles and editorials: "Stop the Fight"—"The women's movement has been in a convulsion of distress for most of 1975." In November of that year alone, the general news media had three big "Whither feminism?" stories to play with: an "Alice Doesn't" national women's strike that flopped; the defeat of state Equal Rights Amendments in New York and New Jersey; and a bitter and cryptic power struggle at NOW's national conference in Philadelphia.

Feminists put forth many explanations for the unhappy situation. The movement had been taken over by liberals, by lesbians, by "crazies," by socialists; had been disrupted by government agents, by leftist provocateurs; had fallen prey to the economic crisis, to a "cultural lurch to the right"; had disdained the needs and participation of poor, working-class, and minority women, had collided with the fears of "ordinary" women.

Many of these explanations were accurate. But what was most striking about the anguished debate was this: people were talking about the movement as if it were its own excuse for being. Hardly anyone was talking about the male domination that was supposed to be the problem. In fact, the problem that had once had a name was nameless again. It was something vague like "social conditions" or "the forces of reaction" or "our own potential for self-destruction."

A line drawn down the middle of the movement would no longer show like-minded reformers on one side and like-minded radicals on the other. The new line was quite unofficial and unacknowledged. On one side of it, groups as uncongenial as militant leftists and Friedan-style reformers were apologizing for men because they, too, are oppressed by capitalism, racism, or a "masculine mystique" that teaches them not to cry. On the other side, equally uncongenial groups, from women's studies professors to spiritualist communards, were ignoring men by building toy alternatives to the "male death culture." Women crossed the line, not in cooperation, but in confusion as to which side offered the easier out.

I found it hard to believe that radical feminism had survived only in my mind, like a germ in a freezer. But I hadn't been near organized feminism since a march in 1971. Possibly my reading of the stories in the feminist press was wrong. The likeliest corrective seemed to be the 1975 *New Woman's Survival Sourcebook* ("Another Woman-made Book"), edited by two feminists who came out of a Columbia University women's liberation group. The *Sourcebook* is some 240 oversized pages of small type, listing the far-flung activities and resources of organized feminism in America: NOW's Rape Kit, the Berkeley Women's Music Collective, the Bread and Roses restaurant in Cam-

bridge, *Feminism and Family Planning in Victorian England*, *Understanding Cystitis*, Free the Children: A Project to Eliminate Sex-Role Stereotyping of Children, Vegetarian Feminist Packet, Feminist Southwest Feminist [sic] Federal Credit Union, Third World Newsreel Films on Women, *Bibliography on the ERA*, the Minerva Astrology Collective, Atlanta Lesbian Feminist Alliance, Womanshare ("retreats... yoga... country skills... a serious alternative to the patriarchal culture").

Looking at the *Sourcebook* was like looking at certain leftist newspapers, which give the impression that at this very moment the workers are erupting in the factories. The *Sourcebook* was asking me to believe that a women's revolution is happening every place except where I am, and that indeed it can scarcely begin to happen where I am until I understand cystitis, rape, economics, the ERA, the Third World, and Victorian England. Another woman who looked at the *Sourcebook* told me that it made her feel the way she did as an undergraduate at Barnard, "where there were always events designed to prove that you could be mothers and business or professional women, that you *had* to do both things and do them well"—the bullying Perfect Woman propaganda that has spread from the women's colleges to the women's magazines:

*A day in the life of a WORKING MOTHER. How two authors, teachers, wives and mothers cope with early morning to midnight work/home schedules and find time to enjoy the best of both worlds.*

—Advertisement for *House and Garden*

Now, lest this model present insufficient challenges, there is a new one:

*A day in the life of a FEMINIST. How a Constitutional lawyer, radical theologian, rural midwife, lesbian mother, and member of the MLA Women's Caucus finds time to start an all-woman rock group and enjoy the best of both the patriarchal and alternative cultures.*

For the most part, the "movement" reflected in the *Sourcebook* consists of highly specialized individuals and cliques, each cultivating its arcane little patch of ground in such depth as to mystify and rebuff any interested generalists who wander by in search of a way to aid the larger goals of women's liberation. Indeed, these women cannot agree on what the larger goals are. On scrutiny, their apparent vigor turns out to be mere busyness with self-perpetuating make-work: much of it serving in the short run to provide its more worldly experts with prestige, book contracts, and grants, its dreamers with an illusory matriarchal utopia; and threatening in the long run to institutionalize the status of women's activities as "alternative."

Radical feminism—which had said, Let's look at the



relations between men and women, let's keep looking until we know what we have here, and then let's fight to make it what we want—had become all but invisible. Organized feminists were mostly off somewhere else, creating alibis for men and for their own badly underestimated fear of men.

## THE ALIBI OF "IMAGE"

**Ironically, it was I who first pushed Ti-Grace [Atkinson] into [NOW] leadership. Her Main Line accent and ladylike blond good looks would be perfect, I thought, for raising money from those mythical rich old widows we never did unearth.**

—Betty Friedan

**As long as the label "dyke" can be used to frighten a woman into a less militant stand, keep her separate from her sisters . . . — then to that extent she is controlled by the male culture.**

—"The Woman-Identified Woman"  
Radicalesbians, 1970

**F**EMINISM BEGINS WITH questions. But the early NOW leaders thought some questions were too scary to ask. They wanted to tidy feminism's "image."

In 1968 Friedan was astonished when Ti-Grace Atkinson, then president of the New York City chapter of NOW, rejected the ladylike scenario that had been prepared for her. Atkinson quit NOW to found her own group, to write papers with titles like "Orgasm as a Mass Hysterical Reaction," and to provide the entertaining and useful example of a mind able to push to their logical conclusions ideas that others took for granted. The old-line NOW leaders worried about the "image" of Atkinson, of the less startling radical feminists, and of their own membership. They worried about the "image" of the movement.

Around 1969 NOW's leaders and literature began

using some of the radicals' language—words like *revolution* and *liberation*,<sup>\*</sup> which had attracted attention from the press.<sup>\*</sup> NOW wanted publicity and the illusion of a unified movement without actually having to identify itself with anything or anyone unusual.

Friedan later boasted that NOW members in the "media" (she named Marlene Sanders, who this year became the first woman network vice-president for news and public affairs at ABC) early became "quite an effective underground, protecting the movement from its own excesses in their coverage."<sup>\*\*</sup> The movement would "die out," Friedan said, "if the 'bra-burning' image and hate rhetoric alienated the broad groups of women who I sensed were ready to come in."

This strategy was insulting to women—as if they were not thinking individuals but slow-witted "broad groups" who had to be shielded, like children, from the facts until they were "ready to come in"—in, presumably, to NOW.

The strategy was also contemptuous of the press, which from the first was capable of reporting the "excesses" as what they were—metaphors—without presenting the radicals as insane. For example, in 1968 the New York *Daily News* reported on the first Miss America protest, in which radical feminists threw high heels, girdles, bras, and other "instruments of female torture" into a Freedom Trash Can:

*Some women who think the whole idea of such contests is degrading to femininity, took their case to the people. . . . During boardwalk protest, gals say they're not anti-beauty, just anti-beauty contest.*

It took several years for the NOW leaders' own want of confidence in the press, their own promotion of feminists as a lunatic fringe, to turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

NOW's concern with image sounded like hardheaded politics. But one has only to compare it to the use of image by someone like Saul Alinsky to see that it was not. Alinsky was once organizing in Rochester, New York, where Eastman Kodak's hiring practices were being questioned by blacks. Before the demonstrations began, Alinsky put up a color chart on the wall and said that nobody whose skin was lighter than a certain color could go on the demonstrations. The verifiably black

<sup>\*</sup> This was when the term "women's liberation movement" became popular, to mean not only the radicals (who had picked up the word "liberation" from the blacks and the New Left) but all feminists. Real feminists never said "women's lib," which was like shortening "homosexual" to "homo."

<sup>\*\*</sup> It's surprising that this revelation has not received more attention—especially considering the furor attending Spiro Agnew's claim that Democrats in the press and TV were even *unconsciously* censoring the news. But feminist news is just women's stuff.



blacks then marched into the whitest suburbs of Rochester, where the Eastman Kodak executives lived, and were quickly ushered away into negotiating sessions.

Every feminist heard the taunts of men: can't get a guy, dyke, dissatisfied neurotic, castrating bitch, and so on. Those taunts were more wounding than anyone was willing to admit. At the source of the NOW "image," there was probably more hurt and fear than pragmatism. It tried to refute a male fantasy with another male fantasy: see Betty's wholesome family, see Gloria's beauty, see Marlene's fulfilling job, see our docile masses, who all think the same reasonable thoughts. As it turned out, this strategy played a large part in creating the worst possible image: that of an unwelcoming movement, closed to dissent.

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**T**HE RADICAL FEMINISTS avoided that particular version of the trap. Kathie Sarachild said in a speech in 1971:

*Now, a lot of women have felt that they had to tone themselves down in order to "reach most women." . . . All I can say is that in my experience, you don't reach most women by toning yourself down, by lying about your needs and desires. That's the kind of deceit you use against people you really consider your enemies or your inferiors. . . . Lies are boring, lies are what women have heard a million times before.*

But many radical feminists were concerned with another kind of "image." It went by the righteous name of "sisterhood."

Kathie Sarachild had coined the phrase "Sisterhood is powerful" in 1968, in a leaflet she wrote for New York Radical Women. She was making a simple political statement: women acting together have more power than women acting alone. In that sense, the word *sisterhood* is no sloppier than the word *brotherhood* in the name Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. But informally it picked up connotations of "togetherness" and uncritical loyalty to all women.

Colette Price, a nurse who now belongs to Redstockings, told me how "sisterhood" was invoked to stifle political disagreements in New York Radical Women\* around 1969:

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\* New York Radical Women was a political action and discussion group, not a CR group.

*Had they said at the time, We don't like what certain women are saying, then we could have talked about disagreements. But instead, people would say, You have no right to say that to her—she's a woman.*

*It got to the point where they would give out tokens at the beginning of each meeting. Each time you spoke, you put in a token, and if you used up all your tokens, you couldn't speak anymore. So the people who had more experience, the leaders, could not speak because they were on the same level as the woman who came off the street yesterday and maybe wanted to sit back and listen. Sisterhood was originally a strong word—women uniting. It wasn't this wimpy-wimpy stuff.*

"Sisterhood" was also invoked to promote both lesbianism as it is ordinarily understood and something called political lesbianism. Political lesbians said that the way for feminists to overcome their fear of being called dykes was to declare themselves dykes and to live apart from men—whether or not they actually engaged in sexual activity with women. This "woman-identified woman" was supposed to be the ultimate sister.

The "sisterhood" evangelists sounded idealistic. But like their sisters in NOW, they were worried about an image. And that worry was a response to the taunts of men: the men who yelled dyke, the radical men who had yelled, "Take her off the stage and fuck her!" when a women's liberation speaker tried to address an anti-war rally in Washington in 1968. These women were going to show those men. Men want dykes? We'll give them dykes. Men think they are better radicals than we are? We are going to be perfect radicals, perfect sisters to each other—or at least we are going to make it look that way. In this they had come no farther than the First National Conference of Women's Liberation, held in Lake Villa, Illinois, in 1968, of which one woman wrote: "The Invisible Audience at the Chicago Conference were the . . . 'male heavies.'"

The Sisterhood Mafia (as they are called by a former Radicalesbian who writes under the name Brooke) got organized radical feminism into considerable trouble. They discouraged, sometimes even kicked out, valuable leaders (including Sarachild; Shulamith Firestone, author of *The Dialectic of Sex*, the first big theoretical work of the new American feminism; and Anne Koedt, author of "The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm"). They urged many women into pseudolesbian separatism, not only from men but from the "patriarchal culture"—thus abandoning most of the ground on which male power can be fought. They congealed the rush of ideas and emotional truth that had given life to their organizations. And by setting up an impossibly purist ideal of "sisterhood," they caused psychological havoc.

Alison Colbert, a feminist and poet, told me about



her experience with some of these consequences in the early Seventies:

*For three years I was involved in a collective of women putting together a women's literary magazine, and I worked on a feminist newsletter for two years. You come into a movement, you have had bad experiences with men, bad experiences with society, for various reasons the Left has not solved all your problems, and you expect this movement to be your Grail, you expect women to treat you better than men, and it does not work.*

*Feminism was the one place where I really went down the line. I said, I believe this, women are the exception, women will not hurt each other. And to find that women were just as capable of power-tripping and playing the kind of hierarchical games which are so ingrained in this society, and which I thought feminism existed to change through its collective structure, was probably one of the greatest disappointments of my life.*

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## ORTHODOX AND REFORM

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B

Y 1972 NOW AND THE

Sisterhood Mafia had created images that were reaching the public as a curious double exposure: a picture of feminism as some kind of ideological monolith. Premature attacks on feminist "party-linism" were appearing in publications like *The Village Voice*, written by women eager to enshrine themselves as the Orwells of the movement. The *Times* was quoting the NOW leaders' views on the radicals' "female chauvinism" and "nebulous baloney." *Ms.* magazine started regular publication that year. It completed the image-making process by presenting itself as the voice of a unified movement, giving lip service to radical feminism while rarely espousing anything more profound than Wonder Woman as role model.

National magazines filled their pages with daring reclamations of the babies that feminist "orthodoxy" had thrown out with the bathwater: domestic life, het-

erosexuals; children, good grooming. Yet assaults on these things were never orthodox, nor could they have been in a movement made up of numerous squabbling factions as well as the unruly independent feminists who marched by the tens of thousands in New York and other cities on the August 26 Women's Strike for Equality days in 1970 and 1971.

In 1975 reviews of the movie *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* showed just how cruel the image of feminism had grown. *Alice* was about a young widow trying to make a life for herself and her little boy without depending on a man. She acts on the advice of a waitress friend: "Figure out what you want, and then you just jump in there with both feet and let the devil take the hindmost"—a pretty good statement of what feminism helps women do. *Alice* figures out that she wants to keep on with her singing career (even though "it ain't Peggy Lee"), and also figures out that she doesn't have to reject the love of a sexy, good-hearted rancher just to prove her independence. Commercial reviewers seized on the movie as an occasion to defend or attack what they thought feminism was. Pauline Kael said a liberated *Alice* would "bomb out or get there on her own." (How many *men* get there on their own?) Molly Haskell said "the liberated ideal . . . posits 'liberation' at all costs, without regard for a person's vocation or prospects." A feminist life isn't easy, but I dare say it is easier than that.

W

HEN THE STATE ERAs

were defeated in New York and New Jersey last fall, the *New York Times* editorial board rushed forward to deliver the coup de grace to the image of feminism they had helped create. In an editorial called "Save the Movement," they attributed the defeat to a movement "dominated . . . by radical appeals [that] have alienated a great many women." (This line was pursued in a feature story, "Feminists Reassess Their Image," which quoted from interviews with nine women, most of them old-line NOW people and none close to being radical feminists). Yet probably more women were turned off by the movement's closed, doctrinaire image than by the few radical appeals that reached them. Last summer a New Jersey housewife told me that her own and her friends' feeling about women's liberation is "If you're a career woman, that's great, but don't push it on me."



Images are a burden. Sustaining them saps energy that ought to go into taking care of business. That organized feminism has lost its energy is clear, even in the name it now goes by. It is no longer the women's liberation movement, but just the women's movement—as if it were eurythmics, or worse. A book critic, Annie Gottlieb, recently praised the new name: "The words Women's Movement ultimately mean to me not politics, not ideology, but simply how and where women are moving."

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## THE ALIBI OF "REALITY"

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**This is the real world.**

—Bella Abzug, in an elevator at the Democratic National Convention

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**I**N THE MOST INFLUENTIAL quarters of what we must now call the women's movement, *reality* has become a code word for electoral politics. Here is some of the reality it was possible to have one's nose rubbed into during the week the Democratic National Convention met in New York last July:

Sunday night the Democratic Task Force of the National Women's Political Caucus (a nonprofit group that describes itself as "the political arm of the women's movement" and has some 35,000 members) held a Party with a Purpose: "to strengthen the role of women in politics." In the red-and-gilt lobby of the Metropolitan Opera House, 3,000 women and men aided this purpose by hearing Mary Anne Krupsak, the lieutenant governor of New York, humbly thank Jimmy Carter for having given the women "one hour to talk, to listen, and to share." Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman, apologizing for her immodesty, suggested that during Watergate she and Rep. Barbara Jordan had answered the burn-

ing question of whether "women can participate with excellence and distinction." Liz Carpenter introduced Gloria Steinem as "one blonde who can type." Ellen Greene, a singer who was appearing in a revival of *The Threepenny Opera*, sang "Just a Gigolo," in full cadaverous makeup. Male photographers listened attentively. A woman next to me muttered, in a Midwestern accent, "I wanna see Shirley Chisholm."

On Monday, Barbara Jordan got all the attention: first from those who congratulated themselves on their capacity for arousal by a black woman's oratory, and later from those who congratulated themselves on their capacity for discerning that the speech was a rhetorical trick. ("We must define the common good.... It's tough. Difficult. Not easy.")

Tuesday, the convention's women's caucus met in the Statler Hilton's hideous Georgian Room—prevailing colors red, green, and mustard—to thrash around with the matter of "compromise" language in a section on women in the new party rules. The compromise, worked out between Carter and a negotiating team led by Abzug, said the party would "promote" equal representation of women at its 1980 convention. Some women wanted the rule to say "require"—a position known as 50-50. Only delegates could vote on this question, but anyone could speak, and women lined up at the floor microphones.

One member of the negotiating team said, without sarcasm, "We had some really good rhetoric from Governor Carter." Another, Patt Derian, a lanky woman from Mississippi, said she was "wearing two hats": "I did not stop being a woman when I went to work for Jimmy Carter. This is the first time I have ever heard of a Presidential candidate sitting down and negotiating with women in the same way you negotiate with other interest groups"—as if women's place in politics were like that of the gun lobby or the strip miners. Failing to note this, Karen De Crow, current president of NOW, spoke for 50-50 by saying, "It is nothing to applaud that we have finally been talked to as if we [are] regular people."

Most of the women who spoke were not familiar faces, but when Betty Friedan came to the mike, wearing a denim-blue caftan, it was like seeing someone from Mount Rushmore. She has always been a stirring speaker—as abandoned as Jordan is controlled. Now, pounding her fists in the air, her voice breaking with sobs, she invoked reality and image: "We must recognize the distance we've come and the reality of our responsibility to the women of this nation. This is no time for demagoguery.... Fifty-fifty is not real.... We can't go make fools of ourselves on the floor [of the convention]."

Bella Abzug, in what was for her a theatrically soft voice, took the odd position that women should oppose



50-50 because the language of rules is irrelevant: "The fact that the statute books say there should be no discrimination doesn't mean there's no discrimination." Wearing a brown-and-white-striped shirt, a tan suede skirt, and a brown hat, she rocked from foot to foot like a prizefighter keen for the ring: "If you have the language and you don't have the leader of the party with you, you don't have implementation. We are the greatest implementors. We can always withdraw our power."

Another woman said, "Can we please take women by order at the mike and not by celebrity status, please." A delegate from Michigan, trying to ask a question, said, "This is the motion," and there was laughter at her misuse of parliamentary language.

Elizabeth Holtzman, in a print dress and bouffant hairdo, said the compromise was actually stronger than 50-50—and more sisterly, too: "Let's win a victory now as women. . . . Let's hold hands."

Shirley Chisholm, her mouth set like a headmistress's, made the only direct appeal to the sense of sacrifice for a greater good that is traditionally supposed to motivate political compromise: "I just want to admonish you from a political viewpoint . . . that we not do anything to prevent us from capturing the White House in November."

The compromise passed by a visible majority. Later, in a McDonald's down the street, I talked to Lynn Taylor, a lawyer from upstate New York and legislative chair of the New York State Women's Political Caucus:

*I was in favor of 50-50. . . . A lot of women were, and they were very bitter about it. A lot of women running for reelection—Abzug, Chisholm, Burstein, Holtzman—got to support the party bosses. They broke the rules repeatedly for the luminaries that we supposedly don't have.*

The confusion of feminism with electoral politics is hard on both the women politicians and their women supporters. Taylor said:

*Midge Costanza [vice-mayor of Rochester] and Abzug and the other women on the negotiating team have been put in the crunch. They're caught in the middle of securing women for Carter and then coming back to the women who have trusted and supported them. There was talk before the meeting: "Maybe Bella won't come and we won't have to fight with Bella."*

Gloria Steinem, who was in on the negotiations with Carter, later wrote that 50-50 was merely a lever to get other concessions, the "most important" being Carter's "promise" to make the women's division of the Democratic party "responsive to its feminist constituency." If this was all the women got for their trouble, they were had. As Pat Tibbs, a Carter delegate from Ohio who wanted 50-50, pointed out, Carter had been ver-

bally supporting the women for a year; it was "an insult to women and to Governor Carter" to pretend that such promises had been extracted by tough bargaining.

But Steinem said that the women had never wanted 50-50 at all, and that the press had focused on the compromise "without understanding that women were sophisticated enough to be using the threat of a floor fight to bargain on entirely different issues"—suggesting that those who worked hard for 50-50 were fools exploitable by their own women leaders and that Eileen Shanahan and Linda Charlton, who covered the caucus for the *Times*, were stupid.

Some of the younger women politicians had few illusions that electoral politics had much to do with feminism. Marilyn D. Clancy, a wife and mother from Oak Park, Illinois, who is running for Congress, said a lot of people ask if she is running on the "women's issues": "I say, 'Yes, here they are.'" She handed me one of her campaign flyers, with bold headlines: "EMPLOYMENT, CLOSING TAX LOOPHOLES, SENIOR CITIZENS, HEALTH CARE COSTS, ENERGY, EDUCATION." She said, "I've never hidden my feminism, but I'm not running for Ms. Sixth Congressional District."

The entire purpose of electoral politics is to restructure reality into artificial, and therefore manageable, units of personified power. It has its own "reality," but to suppose that is the same reality feminism addresses itself to is preposterous. Those who equate feminism and electoral politics create a neat alibi for their fear of male power. They engage in ceaseless and impressive-looking activity, drawing up such documents as the U. S. National Women's Agenda: "a clear statement of the priorities and goals of over 90 national women's organizations representing more than 33 million women . . . , a vehicle to organize women and men for the election year of 1976 [around] woman-defined issues." The list of priorities is so long that one wonders what they are prior to. First on the list is "Election of legislators who support the principles set forth in the U. S. National Women's Agenda." This circular busywork is described by one radical feminist as "a new low—all words and no action." Marilyn Clancy said the agenda is "a perfect example of where the women's movement is now."

To promote electoral politics as feminist reality is also to court the illusion that Bella will take care of everything. One might as well say:

*I haven't always taken politics very seriously, but somehow this time I am. . . . What Mr. Ford and Mr. Carter say interests me greatly. . . . I do take the country very seriously! My favorite magazine says intense is better than lukewarm—about your country, your job, the man in your life and life itself. . . . I guess you could say I'm That COSMOPOLITAN Girl.*



## THE ALIBI OF THE "HIGHER CAUSE"

I publicly resigned from Organized Sisterhood,  
and with great whoops of joy rejoined the  
human (two-sexed) race —Shana Alexander, 1976

T

HE MOST ALLURING EXIT

from feminism is marked "Higher Cause." Of these causes, the highest is "human liberation." Human lib has no official organizations or programs, and the only requirement for membership is quitting "narrow" feminism.

The advantages of human lib over feminism are usually cited by men. But women in positions of power often discover human lib's attractions. Sometimes this is because power insulates them from ordinary life; the world they remember is the past. "By the time I grew up," wrote Lillian Hellman in *An Unfinished Woman*, "the fight for the emancipation of women, their rights under the law, in the office, in bed, was stale stuff." But powerful women also have high stakes in being one of the boys, knocking back a few whiskies while battling the age-old problems of the human race. Feminism, after all, is an admission that something is wrong with the treatment of women, and what could be wrong with a treatment that puts her at the top?

Human lib at its most reactionary has produced a joke called men's liberation (leading theoreticians, Marc Feigen Fasteau and Warren Farrell). Men's libbers say women and men are "equally oppressed by sex-role stereotypes." Some say men are even more oppressed, because the "masculine mystique" drives them too hard and gives them heart attacks. Such notions are encouraged by slanted news headlines, like this one from the

*Times*: "URBAN LIFE FOUND HARDER ON MALES." Only by reading the whole story do you find out that the World Health Organization attributes the higher death rates for urban males to smoking and lack of exercise, while the higher death rates for nonurban females are due to their "subordinate position," including a "relative dislike for female children," "second-best . . . medical attention," "extreme physical demands . . . and the fact that the men in a household have first choice of food."

Men's libbers are colonial administrators whining about the malaria. It's enough to drive one to the position taken by Lady Laura Kennedy, the wife of a sniveling autocrat, in one of Anthony Trollope's novels: "I think that no woman can really be cruel because no man is capable of suffering."

More serious questions are raised by those who argue that feminism is important but ought to subordinate itself to—or at least ally with—other political movements, in quest of universal justice. This is not a new idea. Shulamith Firestone wrote that the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century women's rights reformers "were in a sense viewing [women] as defective men: women's issues seemed to them 'special,' 'sectarian,' while issues that concerned men were 'human,' 'universal.'" Women's liberation is still expected to be the goody-goody movement that sacrifices its own interests to "greater" causes.

*The only way to achieve socialism is for the working class to overthrow the ruling class through armed struggle. Therefore, the women's movement and all oppressed people must unite within this movement.*

—Statement by the Anti-Imperialist and Marxist-Leninist Caucus, at the Socialist Feminist Conference, Antioch College, 1975 (attended by more than 1,000 women)

Many feminists who are more temperate—and more feminist—than this also feel that the government and the economic situation have forced them to question their relationship to the state and to other political movements:

*When Susan Saxe was busted\* and the whole battle started about whether or not we should speak to the FBI, and when things became so much worse for women economically, it made a lot of women feel that feminism should address these issues directly. Because the problems seemed to have gone so far beyond the scope of the women's movement.*

—Alison Colbert

\* Saxe, a lesbian feminist and a leftist who believes in violence against the state, was arrested in 1975 after harassment of lesbians by the FBI and grand juries, and pleaded guilty to complicity in robbing a bank and blowing up an armory.



These conflicts make white middle-class feminists feel guilty, and present the rest with more tangible problems. In the women's caucus at the Democratic Convention, Anna Scott, a delegate from Illinois, who was wearing a "Daley for President" button, spoke against 50-50: "I can't turn against my men. Black men would be competing with white feminism. I know women constitute 53 percent of the population, but don't be selfish."

Last year in an interview with a Washington, D.C., feminist paper called *Off Our Backs* (the best and most jargon-free of the ones I have seen), Roxane E. B. Roberts, from Seattle, described her "triple jeopardy"—being black, homosexual, and a woman:

*Well, there's the Black movement, in which a Lesbian is a despicable threat to the male-dominated organizations. The basic concept toward women is that they're secondary to the men's revolution. "Guard your man's ego, because he's so persecuted by white society..."*

*[There's] no group that basically represents all of us... In many situations or groups I find myself to be the only Third World woman present and there are times when I can't relate and just dwell within my feelings of alienation and aloneness. [But separating] would put me in a corner by myself, and I'm not ready for it.*

That racism, discrimination against homosexuals, poverty, war, and imperialism are "beyond the scope of the women's movement" is nothing "sudden." Solving these problems has never been within the scope of any movement. To demand that feminism justify its existence by addressing them all is immobilizing—as immobilizing as the demand that it address vague "cultural and psychological constraints which we haven't begun to fully understand."

Temporary alliance with other political movements is a more practical matter. Many radical feminists feel skeptical about it, saying they prefer to march against war or fight poverty as radicals, in integrated groups, not as feminists. Skepticism is appropriate. The history of alliances is not pleasant:

*Black and white women begin generous collaborations, only to find themselves in bitter misalliance... The movements use each other, betray each other... In 1865 blacks could hardly be expected to wait for the vote for their men until the nation was willing to grant it to women. No group can reasonably be asked to stay either slaves or political beggars. What is appalling is how quickly morality and compassion went underground when anyone began to taste of power.*

—Catharine Stimpson

"Thy Neighbor's Wife, Thy Neighbor's Servants:  
Women's Liberation and Black Civil Rights"

Whether from generosity, guilt, or failure of nerve, feminism seems determined to repeat the shabby history of alliance and betrayal. Women are still unwilling and afraid to assert that feminist self-interest is in the common interest. That identity of interests may sound like a contradiction, but as Virginia Woolf unravels it in *Three Guineas*, it becomes perfectly lucid:

*There [in men's domination of women] is the egg of the very same worm that we know under other names in other countries. There we have in embryo the creature, Dictator as we call him when he is Italian or German, who believes that he has the right, whether given by God, Nature, sex or race is immaterial, to dictate to other human beings how they shall live; what they shall do... And is not the woman who has to breathe that poison and fight that insect, secretly and without arms, in her office, fighting the Fascist or the Nazi as surely as those who fight him with arms in the limelight of publicity?*

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## THE ALIBI OF "PROCESS"

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We are in process, continually evolving, and we will no longer be made to feel inferior or ineffectual for knowing and being what we are at any given moment. —Robin Morgan, 1975

Our consciousness is the open floodgate behind which stand, ready to run fullstream, the deepest desires of the time; and will now, I believe, run almost regardless of what we in New York and Berkeley and Chicago say and do and think. —Vivian Gornick, 1975

W

HETHER OR NOT THERE is now a "woman's consciousness" that spirals upward in an unstoppable process, such an idea is not a political position, just a description. The describer re-



mains above petty affairs of strategy and error, tolerantly gazing down, from time to time, on the poor dopes who imagine that it matters what they do.

Over the past three years, this "process" theory has become widely popular. It is a reaction to what Morgan, an active feminist since the late Sixties, has called the movement's "early excesses of collective tyranny." Morgan and the two women who edit the *Sourcebook* give their trust in "process" the positive-sounding names "pluralistic tolerance" and "militant pluralism." "No one of us has 'the truth,'" says Gornick, "or the word, or the correct view, or the only way"—yet that is the same alibi the Sisterhood Mafia used to perpetrate its excesses in the first place.

*Ms.* magazine, which published Morgan's article on "process," pushes the same line in the guise of the liberal formulation. It's all a matter of opinion. For example, in 1973 a member of Women Strike for Peace wrote to the magazine to protest an advertisement recruiting women to work at ITT, "one of the giant corporations that manufacture parts for the electronic battlefield in Indochina." *Ms.*, which has made a to-do about its advanced advertiser policies, defended itself this way:

*Yes, of course the Women's Movement means far more than just "a piece of the corporate pie for a few." Feminism is a belief in all women as full human beings, not just some; our sheer numbers would require fundamental changes in the system even if our philosophy or cultural values did not.*

With this gobbledygook, *Ms.* claimed to be against the "system," not by reason of "philosophy or cultural values" (which are a matter of opinion), but because women's "sheer numbers" will change things. How this will work, exactly, they did not reveal. Women and men have existed in roughly equal numbers since the dawn of time, but perhaps *Ms.* has discovered a cache of another million women somewhere.

The "process" alibi is a desperate try at keeping the dream alive. The manifestations of "growing self" that it celebrates sound like last gasps. The lesbian separatists beckon all women to join them in their "evolving consciousness." Jane Alpert's Mother Right theory (published in *Ms.* in 1973, in an issue with Bette Midler on the cover, and widely discussed)\* starts with the good idea that in a reasonable society the pressures would not go against a working woman's desire to have children. But this Mother Right turns out to mean Great

\* In 1970, Alpert pleaded guilty to conspiracy to bomb some buildings in New York, jumped bail, and lived as a fugitive for four-and-a-half years. "Mother Right" was sent to *Ms.* and other feminist publications during this period. When she turned herself in, she renounced the Left and declared herself a feminist.

Goddess worship and fantasies of extrauterine birth. Alpert's followers study ancient matriarchies. Ti-Grace Atkinson has accused the matriarchists of playing "ring-around-the-womb" and the lesbian separatists of seeking "easy, bloodless revolution." *Off Our Backs* reported that at a Women's Spirituality Conference in Boston last year, most of the participants

*felt that women could do nothing to effect change.... This group of non-monogamous, non-smoking, vegetarian, anti-logic, spiritual right-on sisters... held a... workshop entitled "Spirituality and Your Unemployment Compensation."... Add to this picture several hundred women chanting, "The Goddess is alive, magic is afoot," constant screaming and animal hoots, the incessant roar of bongos, congas and tambourines to which many crewcutted women gyrated, the air heavy with the smell of dope and incense, a woman dancing around some cornmeal at the entrance.*

The Women's Center in Los Angeles advertises a program on witchcraft, led by "Z. Budapest, High Priestess, Susan B. Anthony Coven No. 1." Robin Morgan herself now worries that "the spirituality thing has become a fad, a turning away from political activity."

The Center for the History of American Needlework "is undertaking an ambitious, iconoclastic, and subversive enterprise... the feminist attempt to redefine our aesthetics." Rachel Maines, director of the Center, says doily-making is not a craft but a "fine art," and is disgusted by "male critics" who muster approval of quilts because they look like abstract "fabric paintings": "Fabric paintings, my eye... Why not call a painting a chemical quilt? And would you cover your bed with it?" The art establishment simply cannot accept a female art form. Judy Chicago and others express the new "female sensibility" in art by making paintings of flower-like vaginal shapes. A numbingly theoretical journal called *Quest* proposes that a "lesbian-feminist" aesthetic inform women's writing.

Judging from the *Sourcebook* and the feminist press, at least half of organized feminism is now devoted to such activities. Their parochial view of women has caused the public to identify feminism with a kind of female *Kultur Kommissar*. Anna Kisselgoff writes in the *Times* of Erik Bruhn's Freudian interpretation of *Swan Lake*: "Obviously, this is not a 'Swan Lake' for feminists." Penelope Gilliatt writes in *The New Yorker* that "women's-lib theorists... tend to have literal minds about the activities of heroes and heroines in art." These passing references have become automatic. They make me want to scream. Aren't I a feminist? And

\* Actually, W. H. Auden was known to do so. He liked heavy bedclothes, and in a strange house would occasionally supplement their weight with a painting from the bedroom wall.



didn't I love Erik Bruhn's *Swan Lake* and the movie (*Swept Away* . . .) that Gilliatt was writing about? And wouldn't Kisselgoff and Gilliatt think of themselves as feminists, too, if the gabble of alibis didn't prevent them from hearing what feminism is all about?

The "women's consciousness" enthusiasts are whistling "Shoulder to Shoulder" in the dark. Their "process" is a convenient fantasy, like the prophecies of Woodstock Nation and Consciousness III. It may also be close to what Hannah Arendt wrote about "soul courses" for blacks: "another trap of the white man."

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*Each time I make a move my demon says at almost the same moment: "Oh, yes, we've heard that before!"*

—Journal of Katherine Mansfield, 1916

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**E**VEN THE LOUDEST SHOUTERS of alibis are not happy with the present state of the women's movement. "It's obvious," wrote two women to *Off Our Backs* last summer, "that the 'your thing and my thing are cool' idea is ineffective, if only because *no one believes it*." But most of them also hear a demon that keeps saying everything has been tried. An article called "Will the Women's Movement Survive?"—published by the Los Angeles paper *Sister*—was reprinted, distributed to women's bookstores, read and talked about everywhere. Its analysis of the problems is absorbing. Its proposals sound stale: "We target the legislators and judges who need our votes." And like all the conversations and writings of its kind, the article is obsessed with the question "In the year two thousand, will some pioneer activist once again have to expose the horrors of people's lives?"

In the year 2000, most of these women will still be alive (unless they live in one of those rural areas where men get first crack at the food). They seem unable to imagine that they will persist, that they will still be feminists. They keep looking for something new, something to assure them that a revolutionary change in the relations between men and women need not, like every other revolution, be remade five, twenty, or a hundred times. Letty Cottin Pogrebin, an editor at *Ms.*, says that she "would love to see a homemaker branch of fem-

inism," led by women who would "understand the issues and goals, and be able to articulate them, but don't necessarily want to advance themselves"—a curious formula by which Pogrebin defines "advancement" and then places the burdens of achieving it on people who don't want it.

Promising old lines of thought are being neglected. Ruth Bronz, the woman who told me about her CR group, said:

*I called up NOW after the ERA was defeated and said, Look, I have this real problem, I feel incredibly guilty, I feel inactive, I'm one of the people that caused this debacle by my inactivity, what do we do now? And they said, Don't bother us. There was no indication they were remotely interested in having me as a member, let alone as an ERA worker. If I felt that way, consider what women in Westchester felt.*

Consciousness-raising, reaching other women—we've done that, *our* consciousnesses are raised:

*There's no more education that can be done. It's political now. In NOW, that's gonna be the emphasis—make those guys get up and talk about ERA when they're running for office.*

—Arlie Scott, NOW board of directors

Confrontation politics—we've done that. Feminists used to sit in and take over traffic lanes during marches—it wasn't blowing up armories, but the police could get you on misdemeanors if they felt like it. The excuse for inactivity now is that the "atmosphere" of the Sixties has vanished, and that women need jobs more than they need a fine or a night in jail. But what about all us well-off white middle-class feminists who are supposed to dominate the movement?

Reluctance to be bold is more deeply rooted in the craven lie of "woman as nigger." During the Democratic Convention, Fannie Lou Hamer, the black woman who cofounded the Mississippi Democratic Freedom Party, was interviewed by some young black reporters on a local radio show, and she told of being beaten for hours in a Southern jail for trying to organize blacks to register to vote in the 1960s. Others, white and black, were killed. The analogy between blacks and women, though rhetorically convenient, is false. Women are not a minority of the population. Women may be raped because they are women, but they are not beaten and killed for being feminists—not, at least, in this country. The analogy is also politically unsound. We would be smarter to remind ourselves that women can afford the kind of political action they now shrink from. But it's easier to cringe and talk about being "niggerized."

Organizing women—we've tried that, and anyway, today we can't agree on issues to organize around. Yet successful organizers have repeatedly pointed out that



the last things you need for organizing people are pre-determined "issues" and "programs."

The National Congress of Neighborhood Women, for example, was started in 1974 to help working-class women figure out what they want and then get it. The Brooklyn chapter, in a neighborhood called Italian Williamsburg, was, like all thirty chapters, started simply. A few organizers called on women leaders in the neighborhood and asked them to get women to a meeting. About 60 showed up; 150 are active now. They got themselves a day-care center, college courses in the same building, and jobs.

One of the NCNW's founders, Jan Peterson, works with the Brooklyn chapter. She has been organizing people since the civil-rights movement, and became an

active feminist with the group Ti-Grace Atkinson formed after leaving NOW. Peterson says, "A good symbol for the National Congress would be a button with the words, 'I'm Not a Feminist But. . .'" Jean Kowalsky, who is married and has four children, had not worked in fourteen years when she hooked up with the NCNW and got a job: "At first, we thought, It's women's lib! A bunch of nuts with nothing to do! They want us to leave our husbands! We were really terrified. Then I was in some consciousness-raising, and I saw we just had a different name for it."

Two things struck me about the women I met at the NCNW office: the glee with which they told stories about getting arrested on demonstrations, and their attitude toward men. They routinely alluded to men as

The following organizations contributed to the U.S. National Women's Agenda, "an initiative taken by the U.S. women's community in response to International Women's Year, 1975."

- ACLU—Women's Rights Project
- AFTRA National Women's Committee
- All Nations Women's League
- Alliance of Media Women
- Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America
- American Association of University Women
- American Association of Women in Community & Junior Colleges
- American Business Women's Association
- American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees
- American Jewish Congress, Women's Division
- American Nurses Association
- American Women's Clergy Association
- Association of American Colleges, Project on the Status & Education of Women
- Association of Junior Leagues, Inc.
- Association of Women Business Owners
- Association for Women in Science
- B'nai B'rith Women
- Catalyst
- Catholic Women for ERA
- Center for American Women & Politics
- Center for a Woman's Own Name
- Center for Law & Social Policy
- Center of Concern
- Church Women United
- Citizen's Advisory Commission on the Status of Women
- Connecticut Women's Educational and Legal Fund, Inc.
- Equal Rights Advocates

- Federally Employed Women
- Federation of Organizations for Professional Women
- Feminist Press
- Feminist Women's Health Center
- Future Homemakers of America
- Girls Clubs of America
- Gray Panthers
- Hadassah
- Healthright, Inc.
- Institute of Women Today
- Institute on Women's Wrongs
- League of Women Voters
- Lesbian Feminist Liberation
- Lesbian Mothers National Defense Fund
- Lutheran Church Women
- Mattachine Society—Women's Committee
- MOMMA
- Mujer Integrate Ahora (MIA)
- National Abortion Rights Action League
- National Assembly of Women Religious
- National Association of Commissions for Women
- National Association of Social Workers
- National Association of Women Lawyers
- National Association for Women Deans, Administrators, and Counselors
- National Association for Women in Criminal Justice
- National Black Feminist Organization
- National Coalition of American Nuns
- National Commission on the Role of Women, American Jewish Committee
- National Committee on Household Employment
- National Conference of Puerto Rican Women
- National Congress of Neighborhood Women
- National Council of Jewish Women
- National Council of Negro Women
- National Education Association,

- National Federation of Business & Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.
- National Federation of Press Women
- National Gay Task Force
- National Institute of Spanish-Speaking Women
- National League of American Pen Women
- National Organization for Women
- NOW Legal Defense & Educational Fund
- National Panel of American Women
- National Resource Center on Women Offenders
- National Spanish-Speaking Business Women's Association
- National Women's Education Fund, Inc.
- National Women's Political Caucus
- Phi Delta Gamma
- Population Association of America/Women's Caucus
- Stewardesses for Women's Rights
- Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation
- United Auto Workers Community Action Program
- United Methodist Church, Women's Division
- Women in Communication, Inc.
- Women for Media Change
- Women on Words and Images, Inc.
- Women's Action Alliance
- Women's Caucus for Art
- Women's Equity Action League
- Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
- Women's Law Project
- Women's Legal Defense Fund
- Women's Strike for Peace
- Zonta International



pains in the neck, but without the shrillness or fear of "man-hating" that are common among middle-class feminists. Sally Martino-Fisher, vice president of the day-care center, told me with a sweet smile that when she was running for the school board, the male officers wouldn't let her use the hyphenated surname she had recently adopted: "One old man told me I should be at home in the kitchen. I told him he should be in an old-age home. . . . When I was director of the Italian-American Civil Rights League, there was always a man there, like a toothache." Jan Peterson said she thinks these women are less angry at their men because "they don't spend that much time with them. Middle-class women are the ones who were told men had to be their companions."

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## THE WORD MADE FLESH

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**T**HE THWARTED INTIMACY that exists between all, but particularly middle-class, women and men has nearly destroyed the new feminism. That intimacy makes it almost unbearable to acknowledge how much men are in women's way. The answer cannot be to kill the intimacy, or to use it as an excuse to do nothing—not in a movement meant to form "new relations of flesh and sentiment . . . between the sexes." But the women's movement has not talked about women and men for a long time. The *Sourcebook* lists "Sexuality" under "Health."

The reformers have always recoiled from this question; no "new relations" for them, the "mainstream" is good enough. But radical feminism begins with the premise that only by looking in the deep places do you find the deep answers; that if women get together and tell the truth, refusing alibis and even acknowledging their fear, they will find the common strength to confront what we used to call "the man in your bed, the man in your head, and the Man."

We are certainly more afraid than anybody guessed in the Sixties, and the longing to keep the movement alive is powerful. For both those reasons, unconscious and willful denials take hold. Agendas are substituted for thoughts, Tarot cards are substituted for feelings. Feminists turn into positive thinkers, proclaiming, like Arria of Rome, "It doesn't hurt." The taunts of men don't hurt, compromising with Jimmy Carter doesn't hurt, choking back ideas in the name of sisterhood doesn't hurt, doing needlework instead of paintings doesn't hurt, not being loved by a man doesn't hurt—I am invincible, and I'm going to get a piece of paper called the ERA that says so.

In a review of some feminist books about Freudian psychoanalysis, a critic wrote that while feminists talk about the subjection of women, they "refuse to concede that it has any important psychic effects." The psychic effects are that very refusal and the denials I have just described.

Men lie to women. In trying to fight free of those lies, women are now lying to women, and their lies are as poisonous as the original ones. Alibis are traps. Vague language about roles or militant pluralism or social forces makes it impossible to think. Ignoring the sexual and emotional intimacy that most women want with men creates a vacuum into which rushes the Total Woman.

No one knows what will happen when women stop lying. Anyone who says he does, who natters about grave dangers to the family or the destruction of human kindness, is a liar. Nobody knows what will happen because feminism has never pushed that far.

It may be a while before it does, before feminists turn their attention back to where it belongs: to the truth about the daily relations between women and men. The old Redstockings group, re-formed last year, tried. They decided to call a "Sex Rap 1976," the way they had done in 1971. Colette Price described it:

*We called together all the early people and said, We're gonna discuss sex. A funny thing happened. Everybody was so hungry and destroyed by what had happened to the women's liberation movement that we couldn't discuss sex. We would try—and then someone would say, But remember in the movement—? We always used to talk about sex, with people gushing and crying. That's how people were talking about the women's liberation movement. They were crying.* □

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# THE CONTINUING FAILURE OF TERRORISM

**I**T IS PART OF THE conventional wisdom of our time that terrorism is one of the crucial problems facing mankind. If repetition made an argument correct, this one surely would be. I have dealt with some of the myths about terrorism in a previous article; the present essay tackles a few more without, unfortunately, great hope of exhausting the topic. How much terrorism is there, and is it really increasing? Around the globe over the past decade perhaps some 10,000 people have been killed by terrorist actions; this includes both domestic and international terrorism, Latin America, Ulster, and the Middle East as well as Colonel Qaddafi's multinational flying circus. Such a figure obscures an immeasurable amount of tragedy and pain, but it is also true that as many people were killed in the Lebanese civil war in three months or perished in a few weeks in the Cambodian purge or in the Colombian *violencia*. More important, for the past three or four years the number of terrorist operations has shown a marked decline, most dramatically perhaps in the case of hijacking. There were more than fifty cases in 1970, whereas during the past year there have been only four or five.

Terrorism occurs in cycles; the most recent one reached its apex in the early 1970s and has been on the decline. The major terrorist groups of the late 1960s and early 1970s, such as the Tupamaros in Uruguay, the Brazilian ALN, the Canadian FLQ, the Weathermen, and the various European, North American,

and Japanese groups have been defeated. The Argentinian ERP and the Montoneros, who seemed so near to success only a few months ago, have suffered a setback from which they will probably not recover. The number of terrorist operations carried out by the Palestinian organizations had substantially decreased even before the Lebanese civil war. Dozens of books and thousands of articles have been written about the subject of Palestinian terrorism, but the number of Israelis killed in 1975 was about fifty—less than the number of victims in one night in Beirut.

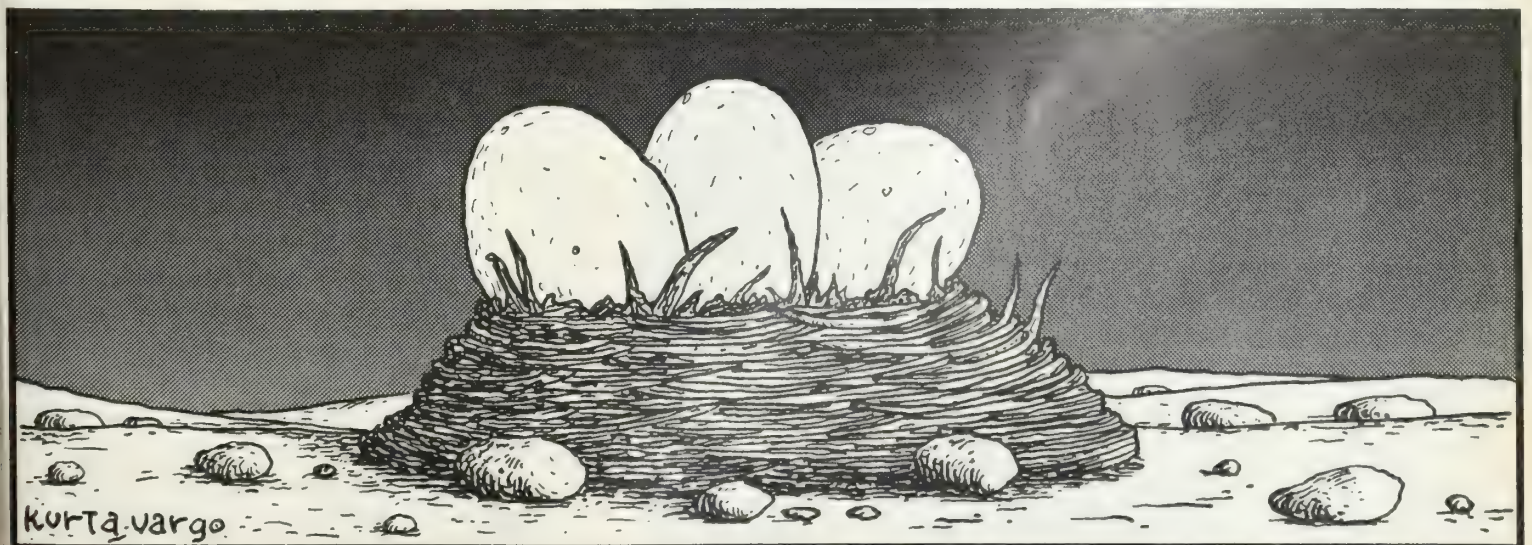
There has been a minor resurgence of terrorism in Spain and in Mexico, but, seen on a global scale, the downward trend is quite unmistakable. American commentators have referred to the "stupendous cost" of such countermeasures as guarding American embassies abroad. Yet a little probing shows that the sum involved amounts to a mere \$40 million, less than the projected cost of one B-1 plane. And as it has long been customary to guard embassies in any case—against thieves, for instance, or stray dogs—even if there is no terrorist danger, the real cost is probably much lower yet.

All this is not to say that terrorism will soon disappear. It has powerful international patrons and in the more distant future there is of course the danger of the use of unconventional weapons by terrorists. Even at the present stage, international (as distinct from domestic) terrorism could lead to limited war, but

Terrorists win the battle for publicity, but lose the war against repression

by  
Walter Laqueur

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this has not happened. At present, terrorism is on the decline. The question remaining to be asked is, Why has this fact not yet registered?

### The publicity campaign

**T**HE MEDIA ACT AS A selective magnifying glass: terrorism always exerts a strange fascination, especially from a safe distance. It has all the ingredients of a good story—mystery, quick action, tension, drama. It seems natural, therefore, that the media should give terrorism inordinate publicity. The vital importance of publicity has been realized by generations of terrorists all over the world: the terrorist act alone is nothing; publicity is all. The Algerian rebels of the 1950s quite deliberately transferred their struggle from the countryside to the capital, even though they suspected that they could not possibly win the battle for the capital. As one of them wrote, if ten enemies are killed in the *djebel*, no one will take notice, but even a small incident in Algiers will be picked up by the American press and prominently featured the next day in New York. He was quite right—the Algerians were beaten in the struggle for the capital, but they won the fight for publicity, which, in the long run,

was the decisive battle. What is news, certainly in the Western world, depends upon the presence of newspapermen and TV cameras. The case of Israel is most instructive in this respect. A massacre or a mass execution in a Third World country will rate at most a few paragraphs. However, if ten schoolgirls burn a tire in Bethlehem, all hell will break loose, for in Israel there is one of the heaviest concentrations of newspapermen on earth. This is partly because their editors believe that everything happening in Israel is most important and that world peace depends on it, and partly because Israel is one of only three or four countries left outside Europe, Japan, and North America in which journalists can move about freely. Let them try to cover terrorists training in Libya or an execution in Sudan, let them try to probe deeply into the struggle between terrorists and the army in Argentina, and they will soon find themselves in very serious trouble indeed. There is no such danger in Israel, and for this and other reasons the Israelis, however much they protest, will be overexposed for years to come.

Selective publicity, then, is one of the sources of misconception about terrorism: another is the vagueness—indeed, the utter carelessness—with which the term is used, not only in the media but also in government announcements and by academic students of the subject. Terrorism is used as a synonym for rebellion, street battles, civil strife, insurrection, rural guerrilla war, coups d'état, and a dozen other things. The indiscriminate use of the term not only inflates the statistics, it makes understanding the specific character of terrorism and how to cope with it more difficult.

**T**ERRORISM GREW OUT OF the time-honored tradition of tyrannicide; Brutus was a sort of terrorist; so were Wilhelm Tell and Charlotte Corday. The question of whether tyrannicide is permitted in certain circumstances has preoccupied generations of philosophers and theologians, and the general consensus is now that one cannot unconditionally condemn it except perhaps on the basis of a total, Gandhian commitment to nonviolence. For there are obviously cases in which there is no redress against tyranny, in which murder is no crime but a liberating act. Every terrorist would claim to be Wilhelm Tell fighting unspeakable despotism and cruelty, but, as a rule of thumb, one learns more about a terrorist group by looking at its victims than at its manifestos.





Contemporary terrorism has definitely changed its character: before the first world war systematic terrorism was on the whole limited to the Tsarist and Ottoman empires, which, by the exacting standards of that period, were about the most despotic regimes in the world. Today terrorism occurs only in democratic societies and in halfhearted authoritarian regimes; it no longer dares to challenge an effective dictatorship. As the character of terrorism has changed, so has the character of those practicing it. Even the bitterest foes of the Russian revolutionaries of the 1880s recognized their integrity, courage, and selfless devotion. Even to compare a Sofia Perovska (or an Emma Goldman) with the heroines of the 1970s—Patty Hearst, Bernardine Dohrn, or the late Ulrike Meinhof—is to invite ridicule.

Terrorism's strange fascination preoccupies many people, metaphysicians as well as popular novelists. Yet there is no more clarity about the phenomenon than there was eighty years ago, when a wave of assassinations, mainly involving freewheeling anarchists, shocked Europe and America. In the 1890s the behavioral sciences were in their infancy; all kinds of strange theories were bandied about: cranial measures of captured terrorists were taken, and a connection between terrorism and lunar phases was detected. Cesare Lombroso, the most distinguished criminologist of his day, found both a medical and a climatological explanation: terrorism, like pellagra and some other diseases, was caused by certain vitamin deficiencies, hence its prevalence among the maize-eating people of Southern Europe. He also found that the further north one went the less terrorism there was; Lombroso did not quite reach the North Pole in his investigations.

It is easy to poke fun at Lombroso's theory of vitamin deficiency, but the basic idea underlying it was not all that outlandish. For terrorists are usually angry and aggressive people, and it has long been known that there are some internal violence-generating factors and that some people have a lower violence threshold than others. Neurophysiologists have studied the correlation between aggressive behavior on one hand, and abnormal showings in electroencephalography, the function of adrenaline and thyroid secretion, the role of endocrinological disorders, and enzyme deficiencies causing hypoglycemia on the other. Their research has been inconclusive so far.

Political science has not made that much progress either since the early days. Large-scale cross-national investigations into the in-

cidence of political violence have been undertaken in American universities for fifteen years; the correlations between terrorism and caloric intake, newspaper circulation, and the number of physicians have also been studied. A frustration and relative deprivation index has been established, using factor analysis, multiple regression, and other sophisticated statistical methods. Employment has been found for many doctoral students feeding facts and figures into computers. Only a few years ago hints were dropped about striking findings, and the general feeling in the profession was that a major breakthrough was just around the corner. Such optimism is no longer widespread, even though the computers are kept going. Suddenly people realized that the scales and models were not applicable to Communist countries, and perhaps not to Third World military dictatorships either. Doubt began to spread about whether it is always frustration that causes terrorism, and whether, even if it does, it can be measured. Statistical methods, in short, are of little help if underlying them there is confusion. Sweeping theories of the "terrorist personality" developed in the past have only contributed to this confusion.

Connections between terrorism and economic trends are at best tenuous. Terrorism in Uruguay and Argentina reached its peak

**"One learns more about a terrorist group by looking at its victims than at its manifestos."**





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at a time of stagnation and economic crisis, but in Brazil it came at a time of rapid economic development. In Latin America it has occurred in the countries with the highest living standards, such as Cuba, Uruguay, and Venezuela, but also in those with the lowest. Nationalist terrorism has been rampant in Ulster, which is one of the poorest regions of the United Kingdom, and in relatively deprived Quebec. But it has also occurred in Euzkadi (the country of the Basques) and Croatia, which are among the most developed and prosperous parts of Spain and Yugoslavia. In short, the search for a magic formula and a comprehensive theory of terrorism is illusory. Terrorism can be understood only by studying historical and political experience and by taking into account the specifics of each situation, not by feeding into computers ten years of news items from the files of the *New York Times*.

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More repression, less terrorism

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**W**E MAY BE ABLE TO do without a general theory of terrorism but greater clarity is needed to cope with concrete situations such as hijacking, the taking of hostages, et cetera. In this respect a great deal of emotion

has been engendered, and there is no denying that dealing with terrorists does indeed involve real dilemmas. This takes us back to the question of the origins of terrorism which occurs, some argue, wherever people have legitimate grievances. Remove the grievances, remove poverty, inequality, injustice, and lack of political participation, and terrorism will cease. These sentiments are shared by all men and women of goodwill but as a cure for terrorism they are of little value. Given the complexity of the world, concessions to one national group will almost invariably result in injustice to another. Latin-American terrorists maintain that they fight for greater political freedom and social justice; there is no reason to disbelieve their claims. Yet what little one knows about the personalities leading these groups does not inspire confidence, for these would-be *caudillos* are elitists, not radical democrats.

If any lesson can be drawn from the experience of several decades of terrorism, it is the uncomfortable and indeed shocking conclusion that the more the injustice and repression, the less terrorism there is. In other words, terrorism succeeds only against nonterrorists, namely groups or governments which refrain from responding to indiscriminate murder with equally indiscriminate repression. Terrorism continues in Ulster not because the terrorists are invincible but because the British government treats the violent men of both sides decently, unlike the Brazilians or Iranians, Russians or Yugoslavs. A professor of law in testimony to a Congressional committee said recently that he was not sure whether deterrence against terrorism worked. He could not have been more mistaken: the problem, alas, is not whether terrorism can be stamped out; even fifth-rate dictatorships have managed to achieve this. The real issue is, of course, the price that has to be paid to eradicate terrorism.

The nonconcession policy of the present administration, as stated both publicly and informally, has been bitterly attacked by critics in the Foreign Service, among whom demoralization is said to have spread. They understandably fear their fate if they should have the misfortune of becoming hostages one day. Their criticism is based on arguments which are by now familiar: they do not know if deterrence really works; being beastly to the terrorists will not solve the problem.

One can certainly sympathize with the concern shown by members of the Foreign Service and their spokesmen. When around the turn of the century an anarchist took a few shots at Umberto I, the king of Italy said





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money  
machine  
in one  
world of  
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McNally

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— and  
you thought  
we just made  
maps



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that this was an inevitable professional hazard. It would be unrealistic to expect such philosophical resignation (or sense of duty) in our day and age, and a first secretary at an embassy will rightly argue that he is not a king. Nevertheless, an individual's concern for his own survival does not necessarily add conviction to his arguments.

Each terrorist action is different, and there may indeed be cases in which concessions may be advisable—not because the victim is very prominent but because there is no reason to assume that appeasement will encourage further terrorist attacks. This means in practical terms greater leniency in dealing with groups that are not particularly dangerous, such as the South Moluccans, but firmness toward those that are. This applies in particular to the new brand of international terrorism; it is quite unrealistic to suggest “drastic action” against terrorists after they have retired to the coffeehouses of Tripoli or Benghazi. It is equally unrealistic to call for action from the United Nations, such as the establishment of an international court dealing with terrorist activities. Various international conventions exist with the purpose of combating terrorism; they may be of interest to lawyers and insurance companies, but they have not the slightest practical importance. Bilateral pacts (such as the agreement between the United States and Cuba) may be of some help, but hoping for cooperation on a global scale is quite unprofitable. The Sixth Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations has been debating the subject for several years, and it has been even less successful than the old and much ridiculed League of Nations. These discussions will no doubt go on for many years to reach an utterly predictable result.

**A** PPEASING TERRORISM does not offer a solution, and as the danger of the use of nonconventional weapons moves nearer it is no longer even a short-term palliative. Prof. Bernard Feld, the distinguished physicist, once discussed the nightmarish consequences of the disappearance of twenty pounds of plutonium from government stocks. What if the mayor of Boston received a note to the effect that a terrorist group had placed a nuclear bomb somewhere in central Boston, accompanied by a crude diagram which showed that the bomb would work? Would the scientist not have to advise the mayor to surrender to blackmail rather than risk the destruction of his hometown? But one successful case of blackmail

leads to another, and what would our scientist's advice be if faced with contradictory threats by extreme left-wing and right-wing, or nationalist-separatist groups? A policy of surrender would lead to constant tyranny by small groups of people or, more likely, to anarchy and destruction, unless of course society learns to live with blackmail.

There is the danger of overreacting to terrorism, of focusing one's attention and marshaling one's efforts against a minor irritation which, for all one knows, may never outgrow the nuisance stage. Paradoxically, while terrorism is on a small scale, it is not really that important what kind of approach is taken. Once a society faces a determined terrorist onslaught it will choose a hard-line policy anyway, as shown, for instance, by Turkey and Iran, by Israel and Egypt—not to mention Latin America. For terrorism is blackmail, and the victim of blackmail is less likely to forget and to forgive than the victim of almost any other crime: he feels a special sense of outrage because it is not just his life or property that has been affected. He has been humiliated; his elementary human rights, his dignity and self-respect have been violated. To argue that this counts for little, to maintain that one should always be guided by expediency, is asking too much of human nature, especially if the expediency is really no more than the rationalization of surrender.

Terrorism, to summarize, is no more than a nuisance at present. One day mankind may be threatened by the weapons of superviolence, but, if these should ever be used, it is of course at least as likely that this will be done by governments or, in the case of chemical or biological agents, perhaps by individuals. There is the certainty that society will not be able to satisfy the demands, justified or unjustified, of all its members. There is equally the certainty that some individuals will at some future date have the skill and the determination to dictate their wishes to society. Such action would, of course, be irrational, leading sooner or later to destruction without precedent. It is not certain, unfortunately, whether this perspective will deter individuals or small groups of people convinced that society or the whole world ought to be punished if their demands are not met. These are the disquieting prospects for the more distant future. For all one knows, they may never materialize, but, if they do, the peril will have to be faced without panic and hysteria. It is for this reason more than any other that the muddled thinking on terrorism, the myths and the humbug, could be one day a source of great danger.



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# CORRIDA

A story by Patricia Duncan



Robert McMahon

S HE HAD BEEN PROBING her teeth with her tongue for nearly an hour, and he decided he couldn't take it any longer. Over the slopes and crevices of her molars, lingering around her incisors, sliding across the gums. Christ, her tongue must be bleeding by now, he thought, for the tip of his own burned. But she went on licking every tooth, over and over, stopping between the front two at each sweep to make a tiny click. And clicking, she almost smiled. And began again.

Yet he couldn't say anything, for then the fact that they both spoke English would be confirmed. Three words—"Cut that out"—would be plenty, and the absurd compulsion to add more words would come and there they would be: pretending that the same universal boring crap held any more significance because the sounds were familiar.

Naturally she would be American. The kerchiefed head, the Pan Am stickers, the closed,

unwrinkled Pynchon. If you were on a train load of Spaniards with one other American naturally you'd end up with the American. Those were the odds, he decided, just as when your cigarettes are in one of two pockets you'll reach into the wrong one no matter how hard you try to remember which is which; reversing your first impulse does not help. Given a 50-50 chance, you pick the wrong one every time. So, he thought, it only follows that if you come to a foreign place to be foreign, to be silent, you will invariably end up with one of your own breed.

He didn't want to look at her or hear her slurping. But he did, because her pale blue eyes, sparsely lashed, basically utilitarian eyes without a glint or fleck of gray, were fixed on a limbo between ashtray and window, glaring. Preoccupied, he thought. Which made it worse because that meant there was a story to be told. I will not say a word, he told himself. Screw it.

Patricia Duncan has traveled through Europe for the past year and is currently working on a novel.



Oh, and what brings you to Spain? it would begin. Then the establishment of home states and the bit about, "yes, I've been through there, lovely winters," and the ensuing revelations about jobs, families, pets. That would fill up the space between Tarragona and Tortosa, interspersed, of course, with a few silent stares into the Mediterranean, those token stares insisting that, "yes, isn't the sea beautiful and isn't this exciting?" Exciting. And all that to get her to stop swabbing her teeth.

Her image reflected on the window, still except for the mouth movement, a face stuck on the glass, neckless. And when they passed the flat, decapitated mountains her head perched perfectly on top, an insane Mount Rushmore, clicking.

"Cut that out," he blurted.

She did. "Sorry," she murmured.

He could have done without the unnecessary word and the look she gave him, a look he took to mean "Let's acknowledge each other," the kind of glimpse that lasts a quarter of a second too long, then flits away. He wondered what made him endlessly analyze and why the aggravations had been accumulating like a layer of rust all over, coating even the inside of his mouth, the backs of his eyes. He watched her skin on the glass, how it slid over the bone, barely covered it. How easy to start at the top of her head, just below that ridiculous plaid bandanna, and gently peel the skin off in one stroke, laying it across the leather seat to dry.

**H**E DECIDED HE'D better move around. Go to the toilet. Getting up, he kicked over her straw purse; two oranges rolled out. She let them roll to a stop, then slowly bent over, dropping a fist then uncurling the fingers and reaching for the first orange, lazily, liquidly. He quickly picked up the second orange and threw it into her bag while she hung over the seat, her hair wisping against the floor. Her arms were like pipe cleaners, he thought, bent stiffly at the elbows. How easily a pair of shears would snip them. The hair, too. Shorn and left lying between the grooves of the floor near the cigarette butts, the wads of gum.

He went to the toilet. Once inside, he pounded the walls, because they could at least try aiming. Even with the movement of the train, you could expect *some* control, couldn't you? A firmer grip, a little concentration maybe. But no. There were circles of piss on the floor that seemed to foam at the edges, splashes of it on the door, piss graffiti on the walls. Spanish piss. Yellower, a different smell,

with a nastier bite that made you control your breathing. He stood leaning against the wall taking tiny breaths that had nothing to do with lungs or air really, just a habit.

I really must do something about this *rust*, he thought. To be flayed, cleaned like a fish. To have the aggravations cut out like a potato's eyes. But it would take so long. Thirty-five years' worth. Noticed gradually—no, noticed in a day. Bam. Go away. You know no Spanish, so go to Spain. You don't want to do anything, so sit on a train. Sitting may become your occupation, your only obligation.

To the Spaniard waiting outside the toilet, he said, "Try aiming at least, goddamn it," and shoved his way through the puffs of black tobacco to his compartment.

Her tongue stopped in mid-rotation when he sat down. She stretched across the seat and slowly pulled the scarf from her head, flinging it onto the floor. Dropping her foot from the seat, she prodded the scarf into the grooves. He noticed her notice him.

"It's ugly," she explained, flicking a finger at the little heap of cotton now smudged with ashes. "I hate shit like that."

"Why do you wear it, then?" It was the obvious question. Imperative. He hadn't wanted to ask, but you have to, don't you? People expect such things out of life. They figure you don't get the big things so you must oblige with the little ones. Which turn into big ones. Morally, he was compelled to ask that question.

She said nothing, just looked at that space between ashtray and window.

"Why do you wear it, then?" he repeated.

She looked now at her sandaled foot, an ugly foot, he decided, short and fat, not at all like the rest of her, a Hobbit's foot with a heel like a pincushion. She didn't answer.

Maybe he'd figured her wrong. She was supposed to say something like "I have a scalp disease" or "My husband gave it to me and he died yesterday so I'm wearing it in memoriam." She obviously didn't know anything about question/response or the values in life. Or maybe she was beyond him. She'd found something to scrub the rust away? Maybe she just no longer bothered. But, God, what a purge it must have been, for she wilted in her seat, drooping her head, those lusterless eyes staring at that ridiculous place; a few nuts and screws were what she found so consuming, a handful of hardware, for God's sake.

In the glass, her face floated past the olive trees which sprang from their poor soil, no minerals, no vitamins, dry crisp things with their pale, lovely leaves. And from that dry-

**"What a blob she was. Surely if the temperature rose one degree she would melt and drip in thick splats to the floor."**



ness came such an oily fruit—rich, meaty. Now, maybe that was something to say. Yes, remark on the olive trees. From there move on to the almond trees, the peach trees, the palms. But surely she knew nothing about them, absorbed as she was with the screws. Her lips were tilted in a way that made one tooth protrude, and whether it was a pensive tilt or something that happened without her knowing he couldn't tell.

"I'm on my way to see my kid," she said, closing her eyes. "So don't ask."

"Wasn't about to."

"Hell, you think you've been staring at me in that window enough?"

"The olive trees."

"Bullshit."

PLUCKING HER EYELASHES wouldn't be a bad idea, he thought. Really strip her down. The fingernails could go, too. Perceptive bitch. Nonchalance supreme. Lounging on her seat as if it were her living room and no one else was around. Legs sprawled. Yawns so big you could see her tonsils. Private sighs, long but stilted, cut short. A button near her navel undone, a visible fold of flesh and to the side a few stretch marks like razor scars.

Yes, with a razor blade inserted between skin and rust, just so, you could chip it away. Couldn't you?

Preoccupied, she slowly raised an eyebrow, let it drop. An image of her in the bedroom flashed over him. The lover, or whoever, would lie waiting in bed as she stepped out of her skirt and tossed it, on the windowsill maybe, in the trash can perhaps. Five minutes later she would unbutton her blouse, running a finger from throat to stomach, absently scratching a breast. She'd pull a brush through half her hair and then drop it somewhere, near her foot maybe, which she would bend over to peruse, noticing the way the toes nestled in a clump. And finally, turning to glance around the room, she'd see the lover waiting, and a look would come over her face like "Oh, yes, *that's* what I was going to do." How she would go to the man, he didn't know. How her body would bend, what that persistent tongue might do, how her fingers would curl and uncurl, looking at her now, wan and inert, how could you tell?

Christ, she annoys me, he thought. Just lying there. Past the Roman castles and the sea, the red dusk of sun on stone, past the gusts of tobacco and the man wheeling the beer-and-mineral-water cart down the aisle, past all this: just lying there. He felt the energy coming on,

in his wrists for some reason, then his hands.

To pull her hair, he thought, yes, or to pull that silver mess of dangling things from her pierced ear, the right ear, the closest ear. To make her jump, dart her eyes, shriek. To slice her thigh. To make her *move*.

She sifted through her purse. An eyeglass case emerged, then some sort of ticket which she glared at, arching her brows. She tossed it in the air and watched it flutter into a blob of phlegm on the floor. She withdrew a bent photo from the bottom of her bag, wiped some powder from it, blew on it, yawned. Sinking back once more into her languid corpse position, she squinted at the picture, alternately clicking her tongue, fingering her brow.

To force a bottle of sleeping pills down her throat, he mused, to really lay her back, bringing on that pallid inertia full force. But then she would probably need no forcing; there would be no pinning of arms behind the head or prying lips open or grabbing that pioneering tongue. No, she would take the bottle, glance at the label, shrug, down the pills. And just lie there.

"My kid," she murmured, waving the picture once then letting it fall, loosely fastened between two fingers, to her chest. "Trying to remember her."

"So it's been a long time?" he asked. Those goddamn questions on the rebound. If a ball flies at you, don't you have to catch it? No, much better to dodge it, let it fall, forget it.

"Suppose so," her mouth moved.

God, how out of it can you be, he wondered, merely to suppose so? What a blob she was. Surely if the temperature rose one degree she would melt and drip in thick splats to the floor, running between the grooves, coagulating with the spots of Spanish phlegm, dark and bubbly. And then to haul in a fire hose, a simple solution, and wash the place down, get rid of it all. He felt electricity in his left arm that ignited his heart, or lung, a place around there; the thump-thump of blood and aggravation made him sit on his hands. For the moment, he knew he was contained within the thirty-five years of rust, covered over with the flakes and barnacles of living that forced you to check all outrageous impulses. Outrageous? He sat on his hands and enjoyed the pain of the tiger's eye pressed against his knuckle, glaring.

But, God, to *suppose* so.

"So how long has it been? Five years? Two? Do you know?"

He watched her closed-eyed face in the window, hanging between the passing mules, the plows, the white buildings. The brown of this place. Spain, wasn't it? Well, wherever, she



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certainly didn't know or care. And neither did he really; all he wanted were strange sounds, something anonymous and reassuring with the virtues of distance and unreality. But there was that obstacle of a common language which carried with it some unavoidable obligation.

"Damn it, how long?"

"Three years."

"Thank you."

She handed him the photo. Black and white. A girl, about three, holding a small shovel, wearing a sunsuit with one shoulder untied. Typical. Except for the tilted lips. And the way the picture had been creased down the middle so that a line chopped the girl in two, misplacing her nose, scarring her naked little throat.

"Nice eyes," he remarked, although they looked quite ordinary. "Her father's?"

At this, the woman glanced up, clearing her vision to take him in, staring in a way that changed her eyes, deepened the blue. It was not a pleasant look. It might have been an offended look, or, he decided, in her something as rare.

"Mine," she answered. "They're obviously mine."

"Oh, are they? Hmm, hadn't noticed."

"Take a look, then."

He looked. Such totally unadorned eyes. Iris, retina, pupil, nothing more. But as he watched them, they seemed to enlarge, even brighten, and he noticed that she had leaned forward, actually moved. She tapped her foot.

"Well, I don't know. If you say so," he said, handing her the picture.

"Yeah, I do say so. Look again. They're mine, not his."

Hell, it had only been a ploy. Of course the drab eyes were hers, but he just wanted to get a rise out of her, never expecting it to happen. He leaned back, crossed his legs, smiled.

"Now, the nose," she said, "the nose is his. Big bulbous thing."

"I can't make out the nose. Somebody folded it."

"Yeah, me."

"Well, let me see." He scrutinized the picture again. God, it *was* a hell of a nose, like a huge pear. "Not a bad nose, really, not bad at all."

She snatched the picture from him. Startled, he looked up to see her squinting furiously at the wrinkled little image. "It's a lousy nose," she told him.

"Yes, well."

"Well, what?"

"What's she doing in Spain?"

The woman fluttered her wrist as if to say, "What possible difference does that make?"

"Does she live with her father?" he asked.

"So I hear."

So she heard. She supposed so. A true blob. And yet she now sat on the edge of her seat, her legs crossed tightly, her spine straight. She touched an earlobe; she looked through the window with that something that deepened the blue of her eyes.

And somehow he felt calmer. The scent of Spanish piss still drifted in and out, and there was that glimmer of electricity at the back of his neck, yet he felt better. To see her jiggling her fat foot. To see her erect, waiting.

"May I have one of your oranges?" he suddenly asked.

"Sure, go ahead."

He picked up the straw bag, fumbling through uncapped pens, a dirty comb, gum wrappers. Such garbage, he thought. He took an orange, broke the skin with his teeth, and began peeling. Peeling was the thing, not eating it. Pulling the thick hide off, feeling the helpless little sprays of juice and that soft white that caught beneath the nails: these were the reasons for oranges.

Her eyes followed his fingers with a concentration that surprised him, back and forth, intensely focusing as he halted in the middle of a rip, waiting for him to strip the fruit completely and let the juice run.

"Would you like one?" he asked. She nodded quickly, reaching for her bag. But he lifted it to his lap.

"Here," he said. "A large one."

She held out her hand.

"You're sure you want one?" he asked.

"What?" She tilted her head, pushed back her hair. "Yeah, sure, give me one."

He held out the orange. Her hand went for it. He pulled it back.

"What are you doing? Just give me the orange," she said, attempting a flickering smile.

"You're sure it's the orange you want?"

"What?"

"You don't actually want to eat it, do you?"

"Of course I want to eat it. Why else would I want it?"

"To peel it. Mess it up. Ruin it."

"Just give it to me."

He held it out, then swung his hand back before she reached it. The orange fell into his lap. He smiled.

"Just give me the fucking orange," she hissed, her face reddening. Now, he thought, she is obviously unsettled. Look at her. The tapping toes. That something invading the barren eyes. Blue. The teeth cutting into the lower lip. And there, beneath her blouse, the quick up-down of lungs and heart.



“Nothing is more onerous than debt and taxis. The former is easy to get into, but the latter is harder to get out of.”

Credit: MOMA



“Says one driver, ‘For New York you need a tank, not a car.’ A realistic alternative to sheer violence is a cab that can turn on a tuppence.”

Sharing a common suspicion that the standard taxi is a spinoff on an original design by Torquemada, TIME Magazine recently hailed with enthusiasm a display, staged by New York's Museum of Modern Art, of what a taxi might be: safe, comfortable, economical and rational.

Not an earth-shaking issue, certainly. And visionary to a degree. But to the artic-



The Weekly Newsmagazine

ulate and imaginative people who read TIME regularly, even pie in the sky is food for thought.

By indulging these wide-ranging interests, TIME regularly serves up a feast for the mind that is unique in publishing. Another reason why TIME has won more awards for editorial excellence than any other magazine.



"Take it," he shrugged. She reached into his lap, but he caught her arm. A thin wrist, the kind that one clench might snap.

"What's wrong with you?" she shouted.

"You're a goddamn blob, that's what."

"Let go," she said calmly. But he knew she was trying to be calm; she was really working at it, and with another smile, he tightened his grip. She swung at him with her free hand, a clumsy sweep; her knuckles collided into the metal partition.

"Let go of me!" she yelled. Well, not a yell, but a definite raising of the voice, done from the throat and vibrating against the teeth.

"There's the orange," he said. "Take it." He loosened his hand from her wrist. She knelt for a moment, startled and white. The picture of her daughter had fallen onto the floor and she stuffed it back into her bag. "Sure they're really your eyes?" he asked, and she shuddered, not looking at him. He saw her again in the glass, her smooth bony profile merging with the landscape of rocks and cliffs, eyes downcast as if gazing at the ground from a mountain top, overseeing, seeing nothing. And slowly, with the slightest tremor, her hand moved toward the fruit in his lap.

He knocked the orange onto the floor.

HE SPAT IN HIS FACE. Professionally: clean, swift, to the point. And then he felt her nails in his throat and the ridges of the floor pressing into his knees. Straddling his back, she beat at his ears and ripped his shirt open, muttering, "What's wrong with you?" They tumbled over and in the chaos of elbowing thighs and scratching nipples, he caught how wildly her eyes moved, how red her skin became, nearly like a fever with the saliva about her lips. And yet, pulling her head up by the hair to strike her face, he felt suddenly quite relaxed.

He gashed her lip with the back of his hand, but it was one of those obligatory social responses, like answering a question or offering wine. And as he palmed the blood over her chin and throat, her blood that seemed redder and redder, he felt warm, almost gentle.

The Spaniards were shouting and groping at them as they lay paired on the floor. He pushed at their shoes and ankles, mumbling "Go away, leave us" and she reached for the half-peeled orange and squeezed it into his hair. She pulled herself up, staggering against the window, and kicked him in the neck. "Look at this blood, you bastard, look at it," she ordered and leaned down to smear some of it across his mouth.

And finally she screamed. The confusion of

shuffling Spanish feet stopped. He lay, his face blotched with spit, ash, and blood, listening. He knew she had her guts and diaphragm working, that she was grabbing her hair, swinging her arms. He knew it was a sight he should not miss. But the sound of it was enough, a high-pitched, unyielding call, the most personal thing he had ever heard, more intimate than the haziest whisper. A beautiful scream, he decided. God, do it again.

But instead she sat stiffly, propping her feet on his head. The Spaniards flocked about with rags and water, but she told them, in decent Spanish, to fuck off. They did. The Spaniards are quite emotional, he thought, they understand such things.

They remained that way for quite some time. He, breathing into the butts and orange peels, and she, sitting quietly, hands in her lap, feet on his head.

"We're coming into Valencia," she told him.

"You get off here?"

"Yes."

And the train went grinding into the station, and he stumbled up onto the seat, seeing her for the first time: bruised, ashes streaked across her forehead, incredibly bloody. She pointed out the window into a small crowd and there, looking older but just as ordinary and folded in half as before, her kid stood waiting. The woman waved, tapped on the glass, flung her arms.

"Maybe you should wash your face or something," he said. But she was quickly straightening her bag, gathering her things, looking busy, determined. Flushed and lovely, he thought. Well, with a stretch of the imagination, yes.

"Are you going to meet her like that?" he asked. "Maybe you should clean up, don't you think?"

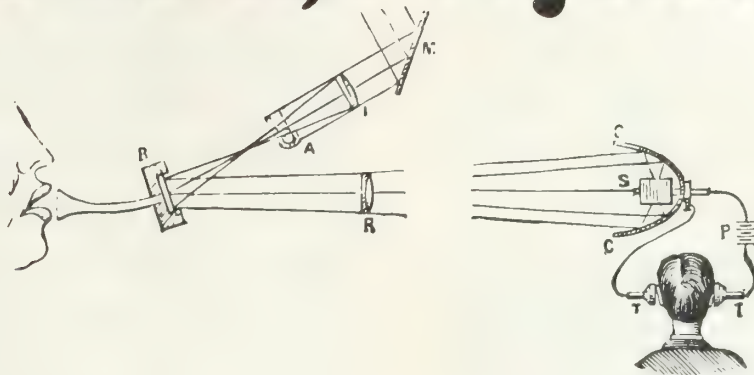
But no, she balanced her bags, swept back her hair, and left the compartment. A moment later she returned, saying goodbye in a clear voice. She stood still, staring at him, and he thought that perhaps what she did with her mouth was a smile, probably not, that she threw out for grabs. At any rate, it was an expression of some sort, more than a tilt or twitch, and she hurried off.

He sprawled on the seat, watching her greet the child and give her the other orange; the girl reached for her mother's face and delicately stroked a bloody lip. And he wondered: Was it in places like this that such contemporary saviors were found, and did they always travel incognito?

He let out a loud, private sigh, fingered a bit of rust on a screw, and waited to carry on.



# What's next, Professor Bell?



*The photophone transmitted voices on a beam of light in 1880.*



*Alexander Graham Bell*

"The greatest invention I have ever made; greater than the telephone." That's how Alexander Graham Bell rated his photophone, patented

four years after the telephone, to transmit conversations on a beam of light. (Photophone = light-sound.) He actually demonstrated lightwave transmission of voices, but it would be nearly a century before it would become a practical reality.

The photophone was one of many ideas Bell proposed to improve the usefulness of his basic invention. Working with him on improvements were his assistants Thomas A. Watson, who received the world's first telephone call on March 10, 1876, and Charles S. Tainter. The sort of work they did would be called today "research and development".

Bell envisaged a telephone network linking the cities of the nation and eventually the whole world. But a voice could travel only a limited distance over a wire before it

weakened and became inaudible. So the first phones depended heavily on lung power. It is no coincidence that we speak of telephone "calls", or that the word "hello", the standard greeting in phone conversations, is kin to "holler".

For years many people looked for a way to make a voice reach from coast to coast, including engineers of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (the parent company of the Bell System), and its manufacturing and supply arm, the Western Electric Company. Some telephone people were much interested by a paper read to the American Institute of Electrical Engineers on October 20, 1906, by Dr. Lee de Forest.

The paper described de Forest's new "audion" tube, a version of the vacuum tube used at that time in radio receiving sets. Basic theory told de Forest that his invention should detect *and amplify* tiny electric currents, such as those coming over the telephone

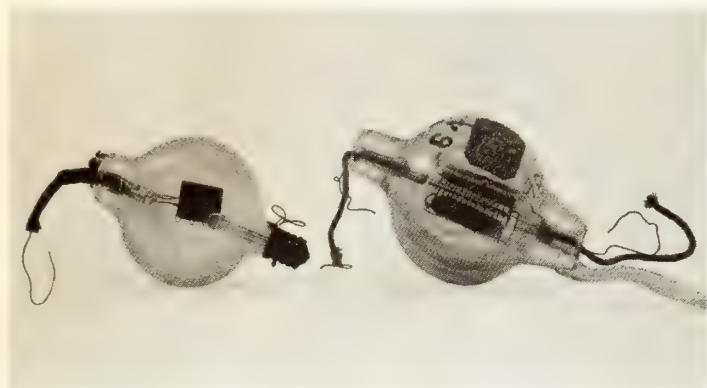


*In 1886 this special telephone set was used for long distance calls.*



wire. But his early models failed at amplification. He continued working on his own. And telephone engineers pursued other solutions.

By 1912 de Forest was ready to demonstrate an improved audion that did operate as an amplifier, although imperfectly. In the group of telephone people assembled for one of de Forest's demonstra-



*Lee de Forest's audion and an improved version developed by H. D. Arnold for long distance telephony.*

tions was Harold D. Arnold, 29, a brilliant physicist hired the year before. Arnold identified at once the audion's major problem: the vacuum pump de Forest was using left too much air inside the tube, with the result that its performance was erratic and unpredictable. As a consequence of financial support by AT&T of the Bell System's research and development program, Arnold could obtain the newest pumping equipment and achieve a much higher vacuum, and within a year he had the amplifier needed. AT&T and Western Electric engineers made further circuit changes needed for telephony, AT&T management arranged for manufacture under de Forest's basic patent, and the amplifier went into production. On January 25, 1915, Bell in New York repeated to Watson in San Francisco his famous words, "Mr. Watson, come here. I want to see you."

As the telecommunications industry

grew, the vacuum tube was improved many times, but by the 1940s it was reaching its inherent limitations. Scientists at Bell Laboratories saw promise in a class of materials called semiconductors. From their carefully thought-out search came the discovery in 1947 of the transistor effect—the amplification and control of the flow of electrons in a solid material. Again the enormous problems of putting the discovery into practical form were far more quickly and expertly solved by collaboration between people at Bell Labs and Western Electric than could ever have been the case otherwise.

The story of the search for ways to strengthen telephone voices shows, in a rather simple way, many of the elements of the Bell System's research and development effort as it is carried on today: A perceived need in telephone operations. Corporate management that emphasizes service improvement. A commitment to exploration in relevant areas of basic science. A development effort, adequately funded, to move from discovery to practical use. Free exchange of information among people in



*H. D. Arnold*

research, development and manufacturing. And finally use of the discovery in equipment or a product to meet the need originally perceived. That final stage is what gives a laboratory discovery the right to be truly called an "innovation". And the expectation that applicable new knowledge will be used in the Bell System makes it possible to commit each year the millions of



dollars necessary to search for it.

The amplifier story has an extra dimension, the use of innovations in many fields outside telephony. That is true of much Bell System research and development. It is corporate policy to publish new findings, to make new technology available to other companies through licensing arrangements, and to exchange technology with others. Vacuum tubes made possible radio-telephones, television broadcasting, improved phonographs and sound motion pictures. Scientists and engineers working for the Bell System made many contributions to all these innovations and the new industries that sprang from them. But the main objective of their investigations has been the improvement of the nation's telecommunications network and the myriad of services it provides.

The transistor, in its turn, gave birth to the whole new industry of solid-state electronics. It made practical such developments as the large-capacity computer for data processing, high-speed transmission of data between computers, space travel and communications via space satellites. Most important for the ordinary telephone user, the transistor made possible a new generation of switching machines for routing calls to their destinations—machines controlled by instructions stored in changeable memories. These electronic switching systems, now being installed, are many times faster than the best electromechanical systems. They provide enormously increased capacity and flexibility to meet the growth needs of the 1980s.

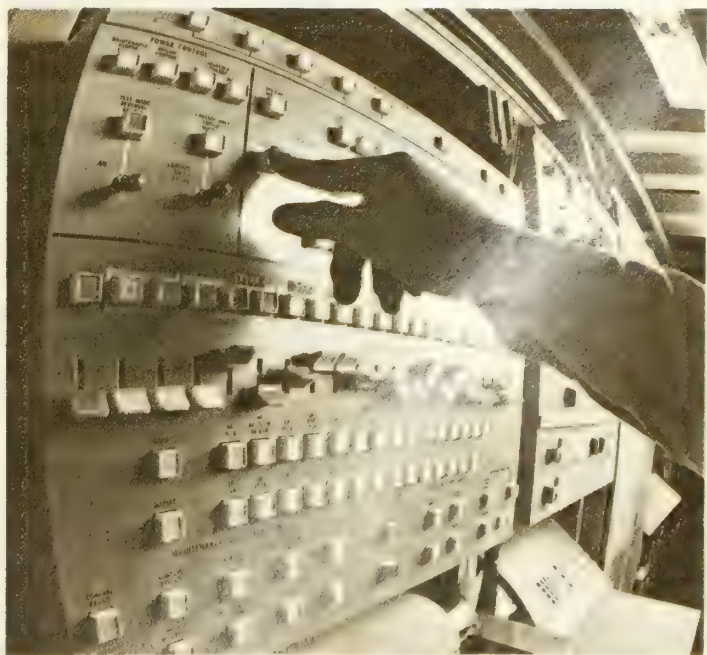
It is characteristic of a technologically

oriented industry that technology must be prepared in anticipation of needs. The search requires a huge investment, both of time and money. And success depends on careful planning and close coordination of effort, in a process that runs from basic scientific exploration through fundamental development work, specific design, manufacturing capability, distribution and delivery to the ultimate consumer. For many industries, including telecommunications, the process also includes activities in maintenance, servicing and operation.

In the Bell System, that process involves twenty-three regional operating companies, plus Bell Labs, Western Electric



*The transistor was invented at Bell Labs in 1947. Today, thousands of transistors can be made on one tiny integrated circuit chip.*



*Electronic switching systems, now in wide use, provide high speed and flexibility for the nation's telecommunications needs.*

and the Long Lines Department. All these parts share one goal: to provide telecommunications services at the lowest possible cost to everyone.

Such cooperation produces results.



According to the June 28, 1976, issue of *Business Week*:

By almost any measure, Bell Labs has contributed more to the telecommunications industry and more to the U.S. economy than any other research establishment....A major part of Bell Labs' charter is to keep well ahead in technology so that no significant development applicable to telecommunications will be unavailable to the Bell System. The bargaining power made available through extensive patent holdings gives AT&T ready access to the inventions of others when the company needs them.

Since 1925, the people at Bell Labs and Western Electric have received more than 24,000 U.S. patents, which have been made widely available to all of U.S. industry and the world.

Bell System research and development work is well underway on new communications technologies to meet the needs of telephone service in the future. For example, Bell scientists and engineers are now working on a practical way to use lightwaves for communications. They have already developed pinpoint light sources—light-emitting diodes, and lasers no larger than a grain of sand. (Both projects benefited from earlier Bell research on semiconductors.) To carry



*Lightwave communications technology, now being tested, uses new solid-state light sources and glass fibers to transmit phone calls.*

light around corners, or under city streets, they are using tiny strands of ultra-transparent glass called "lightguides." Right now an experimental lightwave communications system is being tested by Bell Labs and Western Electric engineers in Atlanta. Light and glass may one day join electricity and copper wire in the nationwide telecommunications network, and we may in fact "talk by light". Those are Alexander Graham Bell's words, describing his photophone.

One Bell System. It works.



**Bell System**





Fred Marcellino

## WORKING THE ROOM

by John Lahr

*Heartland*, by Mort Sahl. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$7.95.

EVERYTHING THAT RISES in America must converge on a TV talk show. The land is a whispering gallery where products and personalities crowd the mind, battling for attention. Television, which 95 percent of the populace have in their homes and watch for an average of six-and-a-half hours a day, has spellbound the public; but, as they say, that's entertainment. Force-fed on market-researched pabulum, we are offered stimulation without content, sensation without feeling. The news, which the public hungrily absorbs as "fact" is only media chatter. The public is the product that the networks sell to the advertisers, a product which demands the cheapest, most palatable ingredients; and anything rare or bitter is thrown away. This is called commercial television. Some people would so call it politics. One of them is Mort Sahl.

Sahl made his fame as the self-styled loyal opposition to the political panjandrums of the Fifties and early Sixties. Improvising from newspapers, he poked fun at Eisenhower, Nixon, Governor Faubus ("I wouldn't want him to marry my sister"). But when politics turned deadly in the mid-Sixties, Sahl's comic questions

got too near the knuckle of conspiracy, and the networks increasingly branded him the disloyal opposition.

*Heartland* is addressed to the Great American Public, an apologia from America's first political humorist who thought he was part of the nation's intellectual diet, only to discover he was flavor of the month. "I'm the angriest man on campus," he writes in his sad, confused, but chilling little book. "I'm not on the air any more. I don't have a program. I have myself, but I suppose in terms of modern-day TV and radio that's not considered much of a residual." When the comedian's audience disappears, there is only a cruel and cavernous emptiness. The comedian's nightmare haunts the last two unfunny sentences of *Heartland*: "Is anybody listening? Does anybody care?"

Sahl claims he's an iconoclast, but he still idolizes the media that made him famous. Burt Lancaster tells him, "There's no blacklist. If you sell tickets, they gotta use you." But it's the networks who decide who'll sell tickets. The goal of the advertiser is to link his product with satisfaction; and abrasive, disillusioning dialogue doesn't sell detergent. Sahl naively still sees commercial television as a vehicle for the truth instead of what it is: a sales force. "The

truth hurts, but lies will kill you," Sahl snarls in the new, obsessive voice that was too ugly and serious for the cameras. "The price of lying about Jack Kennedy is fifty-six thousand Americans killed in Vietnam; God knows how many Asians; the destruction of the American dollar; and a civil war between the CIA and the Army which expresses itself through Ellsberg's revelations or James McCord's letter to Judge Sirica."

It is impossible to practice the satirist's fine art of disillusion within the technology of enchantment. In television truth and falsehood, the first rate and the fecund rate, people and products have the same visual weight. Under the glare of the television lights, murders, political scandals, natural disasters are transformed from issues into entertainment. Sahl remembers that when he started out in front of a live audience at the hungry he would do a fifteen-minute riff and get off. "Since then," he writes, "a lot of people think I've lost my discipline, and they say today, 'Why does it take you an hour to cover a subject?' Believe it or not, it's not me. It's that there wasn't much wrong in the country then and you could cover it a lot quicker." He feels gypped by TV, not realizing that the medium exists to serve power, not performance.



**S**AHL HAS BEEN blessed and brutalized by the media's radical effect on the nature of fame. Whereas in the classical scheme a person was famous for his deeds or works, now a person is famous for being well-known. Sahl's fame and fortune came quickly, much more quickly than it did for the genuinely great American comedians (Keaton, Lahr, Marx, Bobby Clarke). The old-timers took years refining and playing their routines in every city across the nation. They developed a performing resourcefulness; they knew what they were doing but not always how much they were saying. Their secret was in their bodies. But on the TV screen, whose close-ups cut them off from the world they sent up, and whose long shots diminished their energy, the medium gobbled up the routines without savoring their mystery. On television the comedian's body was no longer a vehicle of expression; his statement was not in his presence but in his words. "Stand-up" comedy became king, a phrase which indicates how frozen the new breed's anarchy had become. Sahl was the first of the new breed of TV "face

men." The shifting targets of Sahl's political humor kept him fresh and visible much longer than other, less flexible acts. However, the old guard had skillfully baited the hook of their satire to make the audience swallow their message; the new breed showed the audience the hook and then put it in its mouth. Sahl, I think, misread his America. "It's not a permissive era. . . . It's indifferent. It refuses to be offended." No, it's numb, and going straight for the jugular no longer succeeds.

"I write to you as a man whose conscience is totally out of control," Sahl says. He is working the room, cajoling us with a careful balance of hip political analysis and self-mockery into concurring with his tale of woe. Without the whispering gallery to broadcast his message, he has to shout. Listen: "I went to the kids when no one went. I did the first college concert in the United States. . . . I made the first comedy record. . . . I made a million dollars a year. I emceed the Academy Awards. Then I made just about nothing a year." Timing deft as always, Sahl has his readers going with him, then lays in the vitriolic recriminations against

producers, managers, stars, competitors, an ex-wife, the actress Phyllis Kirk, whose "career might be said to be smaller than life." Sahl writes like a man gone mad with his TV remote control; celebrities pinwheel through his mind and onto the page. Sahl's political savvy matured in the years he spent with Jim Garrison looking into the Kennedy assassination; but for all his insight and suffering he can't shake the stars. They won't let him go. His mind is a haunted house. He suffers, like the society, from celebrity fallout. It diminishes him.

Sahl can't forgive the liberals for turning every cause into a star turn. A liberal today, he says, "would be content to paraphrase Martin Luther King—'I have a dream that some day every black man will have his own television series.'" He remarks that "the Indians never needed a lawyer until they got a benefactor like Marlon Brando." What happened to the former leftists? "The cadre here instead of being farmers and students, as in Cuba, was the Screen Writers Guild. The average Communist in America made \$150,000 per picture. But they sure did disappear. Budd Schulberg lived long enough to turn some of them in and then go down to Watts and organize a group of angry, carping, illiterate Negroes and call them writers."

The left has "forgotten who they are," says Sahl, who poses as Sheriff, Revolutionary, Outlaw, Intellectual, Senator at Large, Loyal Opposition, but is really court jester. Now he can play Vegas or go on a college tour, but he still longs to speak the unspeakable to the powerful. ("Even when the liberals found that Agnew and Nixon were repugnant to them, no one called on me to satirize either of them.") The Fool always liked to sniff the hem of power, and Sahl trailed after Adlai Stevenson, Gene McCarthy, the Kennedys, Henry Luce. While he was running for President, Kennedy sent private planes to collect Sahl's one-liners ("Nobody ever said thank you"); but, once in power, the President found Sahl's jibes disturbing. Nightclub owners threatened by rumors of White House directed tax audits refused to hire him. Joseph Kennedy commanded that the ridicule stop. "If you don't cooperate, you'll never work again in the United States." Sahl was out



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## BOOKS

raged; but banishment has always been the ugly side of the Court's benevolence. The court always held the power of silence over comic capering that transgressed its decorum. The comedian's glory and his fall have perennially been in the hands of others. It is his pathos.

Behind the unrelenting patter of *Heartland* is a terror of silence. Nevertheless, Sahl still has something

to say, and the ability to make truth irresistible. "When I went to New York in the '50's, you had to be Jewish to get a girl. In the '60's you had to be black to get a girl, and now you have to be a girl to get a girl." Anybody who can deliver a laugh that big deserves our time and our affection. □

*John Lahr is at work on a biography of the playwright Joe Orton.*



## INTELLIGENCE AT AN IMPASSE

by John Leonard

**Lovers and Tyrants**, by Francine du Plessix Gray. Simon and Schuster, \$8.95.

**Speedboat**, by Renata Adler. Random House, \$7.95.

**H**ERE ARE TWO first novels by very smart women about very smart women at an impasse. Jen Fain in *Speedboat* is thirty-five years old. Stephanie in *Lovers and Tyrants* is forty-five years old. Both have been to good schools, and abroad, and mixed up in politics, and in and out of various beds. Both are journalists, and drink Scotch, and have the epistemological blahs. And yet *Speedboat* is a ghostly book, a disembodied intelligence, as if it had just dropped in on a visit from the moon, whereas *Lovers and Tyrants* is a jungle or a swamp, in which the "I" thrashes and the metaphors are hyperthyroid. The two books pass

each other in the mind—in my mind, anyway—without touching; there is no congruity.

Listen to Renata Adler in *Speedboat*:

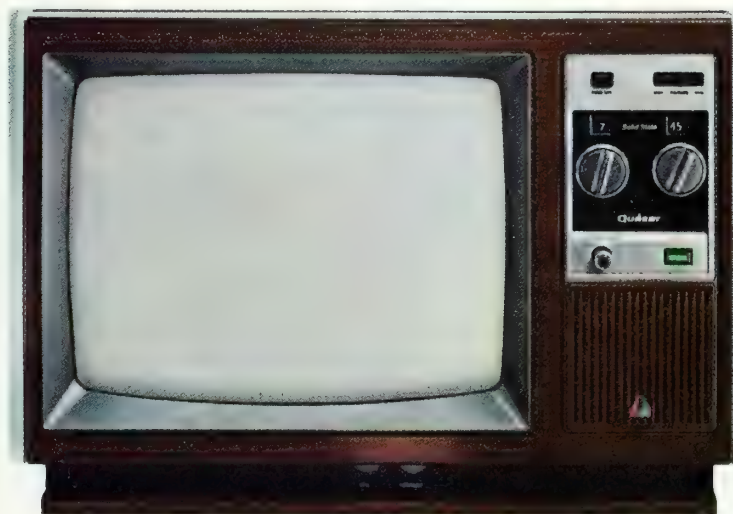
*What is the point. That is what must be borne in mind. Sometimes the point is really who wants what. Sometimes the point is what is right or kind. Sometimes the point is a momentum, a fact, a quality, a voice, an intimation, a thing said or unsaid. Sometimes it's who's at fault, or what will happen if you do not move at once. The point changes and goes out. You cannot be forever watching for the point, or you lose the simplest thing: being a major character in your own life. But if you are, for any length of time, custodian of the point—in art, in court, in politics, in lives, in rooms—it turns out there are rear-guard actions everywhere. Now and then, a*



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## BOOKS

*small foray is worthwhile. Just so that being constantly, complacently, thoroughly wrong does not become the safest position of them all. The point has never quite been entrusted to me.*

Now listen to Francine du Plessix Gray in *Lovers and Tyrants*:

*The times when I've fucked two men on the same day, there's an amplitude there, a thrill at the thought of two identities of sperm mixing a few hours apart, how glorious it would be to treat ourselves to six, seven men in a row, to have a constellation of semens twirling about in each of us, but we women have not been allowed that for the past ten thousand years or so, we the dispossessed, we who were disenfranchised so that men could inherit the vile stuff of property, we who can reach it without trouble twenty-seven times in a row, we whose gigantic needs were suppressed to make this stinking so-called civilization possible, we who can only live out our sexuality in fantasy, in dreams, in religion... and this is what he will never understand, this is how men have enslaved us, precisely by looking at our bodies as objects of worth, I have not any awe for my body neither do I wish him to have any, what is my body but an impoverished appendage of my spirit, Buddhism, the whole East is beginning to bring that home to us, I think it was John Donne who called it "a bracelet of bright light about the bone," what is the body but a modest hostel to be cleansed, enjoyed and shared with increasingly simple, austere, communal ways of housekeeping... and whoever looks on it differently, with possessiveness or uniqueness, debases us to chattel, keeps us as morbidly encased as those wax dolls under glass that stand in my bedroom... the dark night flows, flows about us, he drives on silently, I am always alone.*

Well. I'm sorry to report that this passage is typical of Gray's book. It is mostly swamp fever, an all-inclusive gobbling, a rage to specify and indict. Indeed, near the end of *Lovers and Tyrants*, she goes so far as to specify exactly what her book is supposed to be about:

*There I saw it: every woman's*

*life is a series of exorcisms from the spells of different oppressors; nurses, lovers, husbands, gurus, parents, children, myths of the good life, the most tyrannical despots can be the ones who love us the most... Why in hell have I always been so late, made it just under the wire? The voids of my childhood, I guess, they made me too greedy for love and shelter to risk being the bad girl which every true liberation still forces a woman to be. I think I might have a novel right here in these very themes.*

No, she doesn't. She has a thesis, and she beats it with a stick. Perhaps that's wrong. I'm looking for an analogy that will convey something of the strenuousness, the physical labor, the heavy breathing of her literary method. Stephanie is attacked as though her being were a box of pretzels whose flaps have to be ripped off. Cramped inside are more knotty anguishings, interior monologues, epiphanies, slogans, and salt than a body can bear.

One by one, her tyrannical lovers, her "jailers," are identified and reviled: her governess, who made her feel guilty; her mother, who made her wear clothes of "fecal colors"; her school chums, who tormented her; her lover, Louis B., who adored potatoes with lard; her husband, Paul, who built the "dollhouse" of their marriage; her guru, Gregory, to whom she explains, "But that's what life's all about, Greg. Garlic and sapphires in the mud," and so on. Her father had wanted her to be a boy; she had wanted her father not to die. Only Elijah, the bearded cliché of the counterculture whom she initiates into heterosexuality, is pardoned. Why? Apparently because Elijah is so totally selfish that he reminds Stephanie of what she has never allowed herself to be. According to Elijah: "You want to make me into Adonis, and I want to be Mickey Mouse." In that, he succeeds.

There's no denying the anger and pain in *Lovers and Tyrants*, nor the occasional spasms of style and intelligence. (Stephanie's school days, the relationship with Louis B., and the smarmy chic of Gregory are very nicely portrayed.) There is also no denying that most of the writing is bad, a prose that tries too hard. How does one "look on" a body with "uniqueness"? "Voids of my child-



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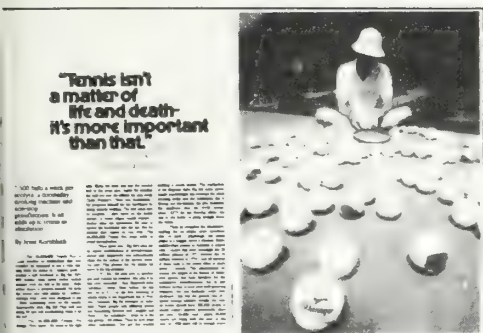
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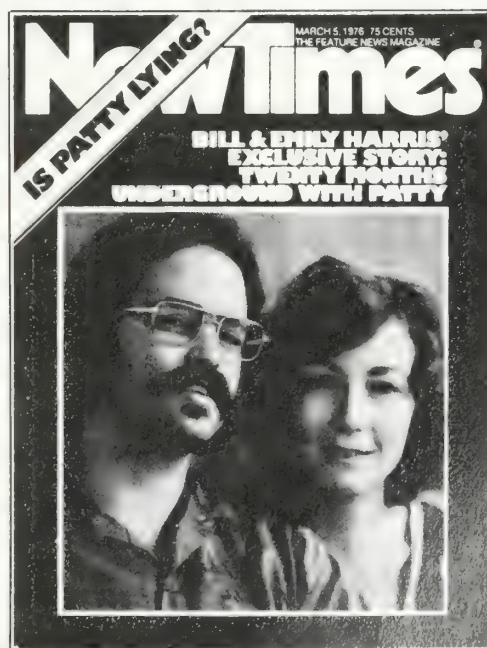
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hood," "the vile stuff of property," "this stinking so-called civilization," "all would be painted white, white like a scream, white like forgetting the past, white like the shroud to wrap yesterday with"—such phrases march from the precious to the clunky and back again. The sex scenes—full of flora and fauna, "honeyed interstices," "the groin of the forest," and "the crotch of the night," not to mention a "great round ball of light" and a "dark, material principle," all on the same page—are particularly silly. By which I mean that they remind me of D. H. Lawrence and Norman Mailer at their most vaporous. Edith Wharton was rather more accomplished at this sort of thing, and she had the grace not to publish it.

Stephanie feels bad, or perhaps Francine Gray does, or maybe both. We all do. Sincerity is no excuse for clumsiness in writing a novel; nor is writing a novel a license to mewl. That the nifty, tough-minded, often brilliant author of *Divine Disobedience* has committed this book is an astonishment.

**R**ENATA ADLER IS another matter entirely. First, *Speedboat* is basically sexless. Of course, Miss Fain couples, but this, like almost everything else about her, must be inferred. Fain does not declare herself; she has to be pieced together by the reader from what she chooses to report and generalize about. She stands in for the generation that went to college, wherever, in the 1950s, graduating to New York and the idea business: "It is true that we all grew up in a gentler spirit.... It is also true that we are all here now, in our city lives, and our city jobs, and nobody came and got us for them in our bassinets."

Second, nobody in this country writes better prose than Renata Adler's. It is Lillian Hellman, young again; Joan Didion, with a tendency to giggle; Albert Camus, on one of his sunny days:

*There are times when every act, no matter how private or unconscious, becomes political. Whom you live with, how you wear your hair, whether you mar-*

*ry, whether you insist that your child take piano lessons, what are the brand names on your shelf; all these become political decisions. At other times, no act—no campaign or tract, statement or rampage—has any political charge at all. People with the least sense of which times are, and which are not, political are usually those most avid about politics. At six one morning, Will went out in jeans and frayed sweater to buy a quart of milk. A tourist bus went by. The megaphone was directed at him. "There's one," it said. That was in the 1960s. Ever since, he's wondered. There's one what?*

If the method is one of indirection, exclusion, austerity, a polishing of fragments—her paragraphs rise like bright balloons in winter, with always a cool distance between them, a dismay—it is appropriate to a generation brought up to believe that you can't be too careful:

*Don't say you have not been warned. We never said it. Nobody I ever met who grew up in the fifties, Lord knows, would have said it, could properly claim on any subject whatsoever not to have been warned.*

If she seems to ape the *nouveau roman*—no personalities, no plot in this novel—that, too, is appropriate to the generation, which had neither personality nor plot. What the generation had was a sad psychology; what it developed was an ironic sensibility:

*The weather last Friday was terrible. The flight to Martha's Vineyard was "decisional."*

*"What does 'decisional' mean?" a small boy asked. "It means we might have to land in Hyannis," his mother said. It is hard to understand how anyone learns anything.*

Or: "Self-pity" is just sadness, I think, in the pejorative."

The *nouveau roman* does not have a psychology or an irony; it has objects, randomly noticed, fearlessly observed. *Speedboat* admits it isn't quite sure what to make of or do with what it notices; it dwells on the discrepancies between what might decently have been expected and what, in fact, happened. It implies a tired clucking. *Momentum* is one of Adler's special words, also appropriate: surprise, rage, envy, the ele

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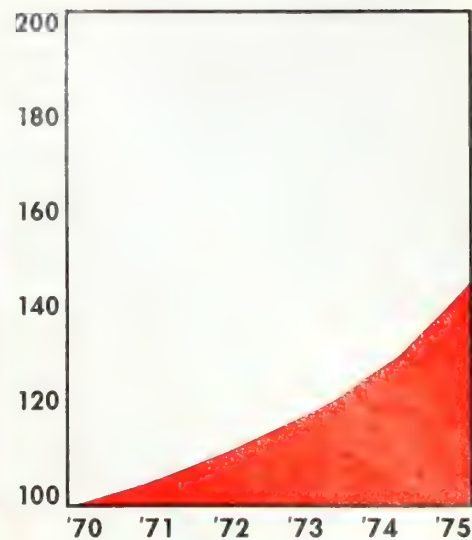
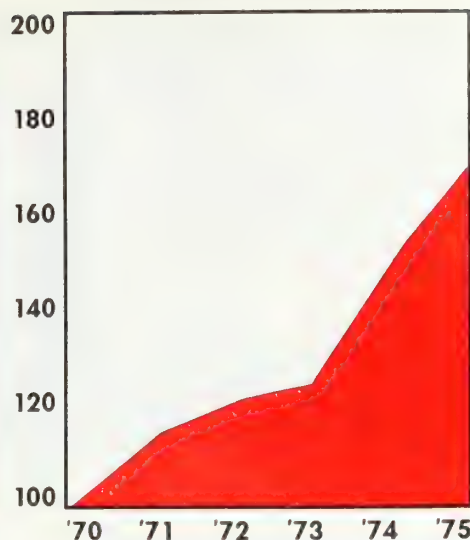
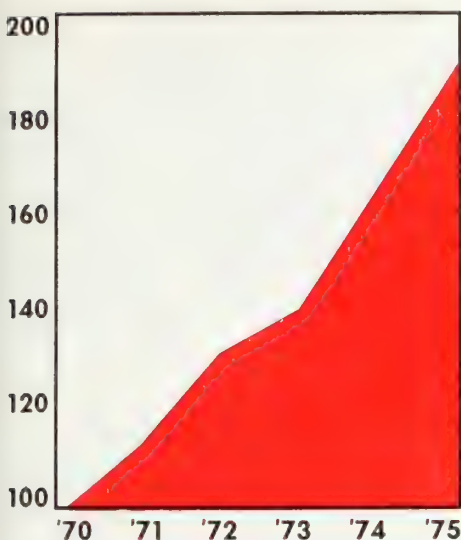
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## BOOKS

ment of danger can get a momentum started, even of clucking, or as easily deflected. Momentum is unreliable, like the 1950s.

Unlike *Lovers and Tyrants*, *Speedboat* does not insist; it suggests. It is not a wiretap; it is an album of superb photographs of a state of mind, almost as though Kafka were writing the "Talk of the Town" section of *The New Yorker*. Why is it called *Speedboat*? There is this incident:

*And then, at speed, the boat, at its own angle to the sea, began to hit each wave with flat, hard, jarring thuds, like the heel of a hand against a tabletop. As it slammed along, the Italians sat, ever more low and loose on their hard seats, while the American lady, in her eagerness, began to bounce with anticipation over every little wave. The boat scudded hard; she exaggerated every happy bounce. Until she broke her neck.*

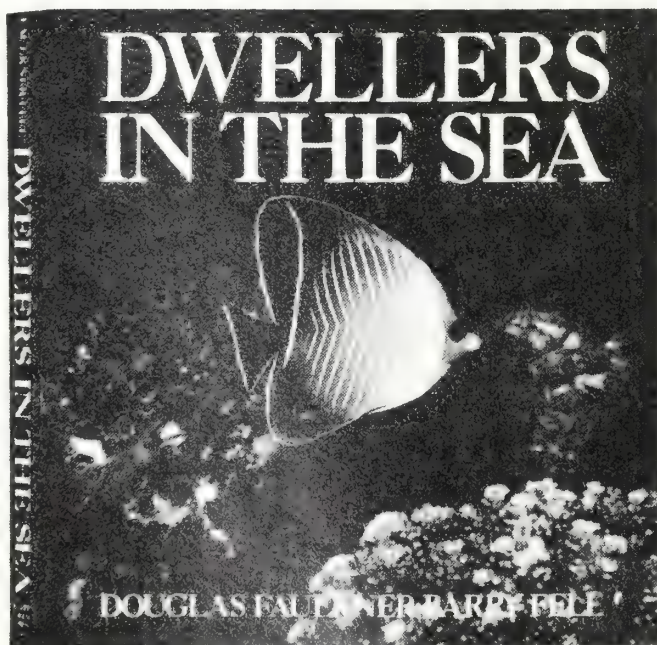
Low and loose on the hard seats, in order to save their necks, were the children of the cautious 1950s, with their "antipathy and boredom, their "quality of meaning no harm, their ambition "to become safe and successful; to get married; to marry someone safe and successful; to have for our children some sort of worldly safety and success," their radical experience of "the jet, the Xerox, the abortion law, and of course, the tape recorder."

I admit belonging to what Adler calls "our set." Reading her book is like looking in a mirror. However funny it ruins the day. What will we do with this irony, the sum of all we seem to have learned? We will probably use it to criticize the counterfeiting of emotions of the generation that came before us, and the camping—nostalgia laced with contempt—of those emotions by the generation that came after us. Our experience seems to have fitted us for very little but criticism.

Adler should not, however, have concluded *Speedboat* with the irony Fain about to have a child and trying to decide how to tell the father. There are no real children in *Speedboat*. Perhaps "our set" oughtn't to have any. Kids deserve better than "low and loose."

John Leonard is the chief cultural correspondent of the New York Times.

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Fred Marcellino

# A TRYST WITH DEATH

by Paul Zweig

**Julian Grenfell: His Life and the Times of His Death, 1888-1915,** by Nicholas Mosley. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, \$12.95.

**A**CCORDING TO Nicholas Mosley, the first world war came about because the various participants, in particular the English upper classes, had nothing better to do at the time. War on the whole seemed a grand alternative to pheasant hunting, pig sticking, and sexual misbehavior. The mothers who had ruled Victorian society could send their sons to sacrifice, like the heroines of the tragic plays they admired. The fathers could stop killing animals in private forests, and do something for honor in some national office or other. The sons, stifling in a world grown too small, too unreal, could take a vacation in "reality" for a while, with the grim approval of parents whose values they could neither accept nor reject. All things considered, war was a good idea. For Julian Grenfell, the subject of Mosley's fascinating biography, it was a Homeric release without the Homeric gloom. Until he was killed near Ypres in 1915, after half a year at the front, it was the only happy

time he had known in his life, if "happy" adequately describes the resonant joy which Julian's letters communicate during those months of killing and dying.

What sort of life must a morally sensitive man have led for him to love war so much? Mosley asks. Not the bracing ideal of war, which excited Julian's beautiful mother, but the actual dirt and fear, the killing and being killed. Julian became a hero, a "golden" apparition out of the Greek books his peers loved so much. At his death, all of English high society, including Henry James, wrote his mother grieving letters. Julian's journal makes it clear that "a terrible beauty" was indeed born in him during the months of slaughter. This was no case of a man stumbling into heroism, like the Sergeant York of myth and movie. Julian sauntered among the falling shells like a happy boy, or like a god.

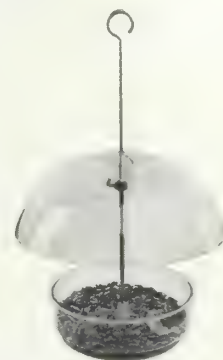
It is clear that Mosley loves the Julian Grenfell he discovered in letter after letter; loves his complex tormented mind, loves the struggle Julian waged almost from birth against a trivial society, but especially against his mother, Ettie, who was the Circe of that world, a ruthlessly

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innocent woman whose talent was to turn men into sad worshiping boys, and her own boys (Julian's brother Billy was also killed in battle) into prisoners whose only escape from her could be into heroism. Yet Mosley cannot love war. Julian's warrior joy is alien and strange to him, and he tries, in his book, to grasp its secret.

**T**HIS IS THE STORY of a mother and a son, and Mosley means it to be a paradigm. The Grenfells represent the soul of aristocratic England on the eve of the great war. Ettie and Julian, both of them icy, remote, thrillingly ideal, are like the characters in a *psychomachia*. The story imposes them upon our interest, for they don't belong to history. The Grenfells were second-line nobility. Ettie, for all her cultural pretensions, never knew the really innovative writers and artists of her day. Her husband, Willie, was a stalwart of the trivial life, hunting, sporting, chairing committees, and little more. Julian wrote a book that was never published, and seemed well on his way to a wasted life. They were celebrities of a sort in a world rubbed out by the war, and their lives come to us as from a time capsule: they seem new, almost exotic, because they had been so forgotten.

Mosley's narrative, it turns out, is a family affair. He is married to Ettie's granddaughter. His grandfather, George Curzon, belonged to the constellation of forlorn men whom Ettie enthralled in the 1890s. The splendid country houses which are the setting of his story had, when he knew them, become gloomy stone piles in which very old women remembered a decades-old dream which was their youth in prewar aristocratic England. The dream was filled with garden parties and parlor games, hunting sorties and disembodied love affairs. In the dream, all the women were beautiful, all the men handsome and helpless. From the dream had come the deadliest war in the history of the world. But, as Mosley makes clear, dreams are more stubborn than reality, and last longer. Ettie, her magnificent sons killed, swept through the debris like a goddess in an allegorical painting. In the allegory, she represents "the

ideal," striding untouched and tall across the ruins which she dwarfs.

In a sense, Mosley's book is really about Ettie. She fascinated her contemporaries, and men could not resist her. Even when she was forty, and no longer quite beautiful, men struggled to make her love them. Her lovers got younger as she got older. By the time of the war, they were her son's age, and Julian knew them. Possibly that is why he spent his last years out of the country, as a cavalry officer—miserably unhappy—in India and South Africa.

Mosley remarks that there was nothing scandalous about all this. Indeed, the rules of Victorian society provided for it. Although Ettie and Willie Grenfell were known to be devoted to each other, and more family-oriented than most of their friends, they spent months of each year in separate parts of the world. The children were brought up by servants. A visit from mummy or daddy was an event to dress up and rehearse cheerful lines for. Beautiful mothers tended to have heartsick young men at their feet, as part of the family, so to speak. They wrote each other love letters like Pre-Raphaelite poems in which it is unclear what, if anything, is happening under the heavenly emotions. Mosley assumes that some of it was sexual, but probably not much.

Only Ettie's success was unusual, not her behavior. If one is to believe the letters she received—and preserved in testimonial packets—men worshiped her, threatened suicide for her, confessed their general unworthiness and their specific guilt, begged to be forgiven, and apparently were forgiven, at least for a while. It is never clear what they are forgiven for. The letters never say. In fact, all the letters—those she received in the mysterious bloom of her 1890s youth, those sent twenty years later by men her son's age, even some of those written by Julian himself—might have come from the same man: woefully articulate, puzzled by Ettie's beautiful remoteness, sure the fault (for what?) is his, begging to be allowed a space at the feet of her sunlit presence. Even allowing for the required hyperbole of such letters, Mosley supplies enough evidence to confirm Ettie's genuine power.

Her photographs show a Mona

Lisa quality, a hard reserve, as if her presence were directed inward, and only overflowed to others. Yet her life was rigorously composed as a set piece for society. She was theatrical, and insisted on the theatricality of all around her. When the sloppy side of life intruded—the death of friends or lovers, Julian's depressions and his self-lacerating hostility—she willed it to be beautiful. She compelled even the dying to be radiant with happiness at their good luck. She preached her "stubborn gospel of joy," as her friends called it, and made the sad ones feel guilty for their sadness.

It is, on the whole, a breathtaking portrait. And the fact that few of Ettie's own letters have survived, aside from tantalizing the reader, gives her a mysterious, almost absent quality which becomes part of her aura.

**W**ITH SUCH A mother, what could Julian do? Become one of her "lovers"? Ettie turned her men into awkward sons anyway, bestowing only an occasional sexual favor, the anniversaries of which were solemnly recalled in their letters. But Julian could not be one of them, however much he longed to bask in her approval. He despised the "smart set," and told his mother so in a running argument which he called his "fight for life." Until the war, it was a fight that he was losing. However much he fought Ettie and longed to be a separate individual, her disapproval crushed him, and drove him to furious physical exploits. He hated group activities, like the pheasant shoots his father loved, where thousands of birds were mowed down in scenes described by Mosley as ironic foreshadowings of World War I. But he enjoyed hunting dangerous game, and he loved boxing. With these activities, so much a part of the aristocratic ethos he rebelled against, he tried to exhaust himself to the point of mindlessness, while covertly bidding for Ettie's admiration. She gave the admiration profusely in letters which seemed to depress him even more.

The low point was Julian's mental collapse in 1910, when he lay almost catatonic with depression for months. According to Mosley, the crisis was



brought on, at least in part, by his family's disdain for a book of social philosophy he had written (the disdain was widely shared, since no one would publish even a chapter of it). Their disapproval shouldn't have surprised him, since his book, in the passages Mosley quotes, is a bitter attack on Ettie's "smart set" and on the whole frivolous ethos of upper-class England. Most of all, it was a decisive answer to Ettie's accusation that he lacked in "affectionateness," i.e., in the elegant sociability which was the meaning of life to her. She shrugged the book off, and seemed not to notice Julian's collapse, though he lay bedridden in her house for months. Her "stubborn gospel of joy" walled out his misery. Instead, at that very time, she wrote an exalted, somewhat silly love poem to the memory of Archie Gordon, a boy Julian's age with whom she had been having one of her heavenly relationships, until he died the year before as the result of a car accident.

As Mosley tells it, the war was Julian's release from bondage, but also his reconciliation with the wilted chivalry of his mother's ideals. As a warrior, he bathed in the reality of life and death, of courage and skill. Danger became an exalted mirror in which he saw himself utterly changed. He could throw himself into this pure adventure, and yet, miraculously, take with him his mother's blessing, for he was defending honor and England, and the age-old ideals of aristocracy. Both his worlds could melt into one in the crucible of heroism.

Mosley's paradigm is chilling, and he tells it well. He discreetly marshals Ettie's packets of letters and her family journal, letting them speak, most often, for themselves. One remembers small touches, such as Ettie adding passages of filial devotion when she transcribes Julian's letters into the journal, which she circulated, to gasps of admiration, among her friends after Julian's death.

When a book is sufficiently encompassing, one forgives its weak points. Mosley's sometimes elegant prose can be annoyingly careless ("This is not to say that this is not exploratory"). More serious, his analyses of character and situations tend to become turgid. Too many layers



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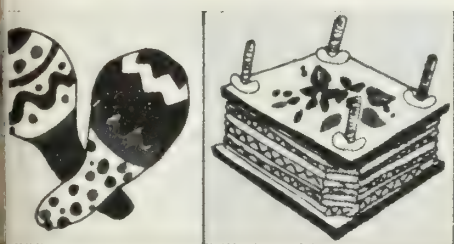
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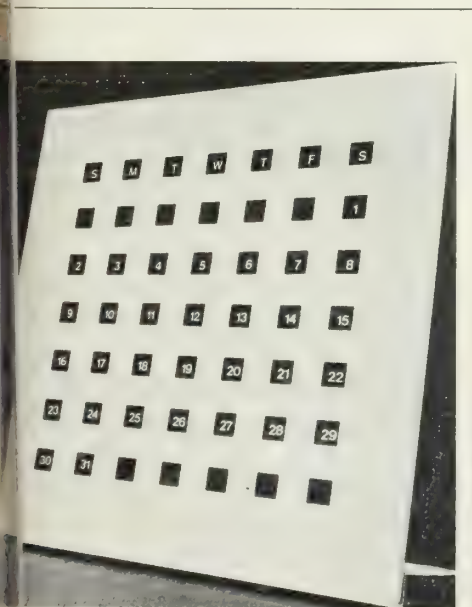
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of insight are jumbled into lazy paragraphs. When he doesn't editorialize, his book is keen and swift. To lift his family drama to the level of a paradigm, he generalizes too much about Victorian education, social structure, and politics, without being incisive. Indeed, he can

be quite silly, as when he remarks portentously the presence of Homer in the curriculum at Eton: "The Iliad was considered edifying for boys and parents—a hymn to slaughter and betrayal." From the Iliad to World War I is, for Mosley, a hop, skip, and jump which I cannot take

with him. It is a tribute to Mosley's portrait of Ettie and Julian that these flaws are not fatal, but mere hindrances in an otherwise moving story.

*Paul Zweig is the author of The Adventurer and two books of poetry. His most recent book is Three Journeys.*

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

by Evan Connell

**Roots**, by Alex Haley. Doubleday, \$12.50.

Nine or ten years ago I had lunch with a group that included Alex Haley, who even then was at work on *Roots*. He didn't mind talking about his book. In fact, he was eager to talk about it. In fact, he couldn't stop. He would sometimes lift a loaded fork or spoon which he would display in midair like a piece of sculpture and then put down because what he was saying was inestimably more important than eating.

Haley is a seventh-generation descendant of Kunta Kinte, a West African captured by slave traders in 1767 and sold to a Virginian named Waller. *Roots*, a mélange of fact and fiction, dramatizes the history of those generations. It opens with Kinte's birth and concludes with the birth of the author—though Haley adds a wonderful twenty-page account of how he wrote the book.

The African sequence of Kinte's childhood, his capture, the slave ship, and his first years in Virginia are altogether interesting. Haley traveled to Juffure, the Gambian village where Kinte was born, not only to visit the ancestral home but to hear a *griot*—a living library—an old man whose existence has been dedicated to memorizing the history of the village; and from the *griot* Haley learned about Kinte's boyhood, the names of his parents and his brothers, and the circumstances of his capture in the forest at the age of seventeen. Kunta Kinte is the symbolic figure, a free man who died in slavery, and he ab-

solutely dominates this book. The effect, therefore, is unlike that of *Buddenbrooks*, where we read a gradually unwinding scroll; *Roots* is more like a fresco depicting a giant followed by pygmies.

Among succeeding generations a few individuals do poke their heads up: Kizzy, Chicken George—so called because he handles gamecocks—the decadent white master Tom Lea, and one or two more. But most are shapeless transients, easy to forget. Why? Partly because the blacks all speak the same dialect: "Heish yo' mouf! Git on 'way from me, worryin' me to death!" Partly because, in contrast to the redoubtable African who made four escape attempts, they have been subjugated, their personalities crushed. Nor are they seen against the vivid backdrop of Gambia. But mostly it's because Kinte was recreated with such force that other members of the cast, like bit players, seem insignificant.

So the vigorous beginning gives way at last to the product of an author working from notes. References to the Louisiana Purchase, the Alamo, Fort Sumter, Emancipation, et cetera, tell us how far along we are, which is logical and perhaps inevitable, but somehow the Gambian drumbeats promised more excitement.

Nevertheless, *Roots* might be remembered for two things. First, it's an original and dramatic idea that probably won't be duplicated. Second, Haley has painted the downward steps from freedom to slavery. Kinte becomes a slave not because he is a slave but because after years

of slavery he thinks like a slave—which is genuinely alarming. It is alarming because, as we listen to him rationalize each concession, it sounds so familiar.

**The Main**, by Trevanian. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$8.95.

*The Main* is a detective story with enough wit and perception to attract readers who don't give a damn who killed Roger Ackroyd. Lieutenant La Pointe plods around a shabby quarter of Montreal trying to identify a murderer, though just who the villain may be seems almost irrelevant—of less concern to us than La Pointe himself, for he is getting old and has a bad heart and is lonely. One night he picks up a crippled girl. He doesn't much like her, nor does she like him; but she stays on day after day because she has no place to go and from his point of view it's better than coming home to an empty apartment. So they more or less live together while La Pointe worries about his heart and attempts to solve the crime.

Trevanian's narrative style is warm, his raffish characters sketched with considerable insight, he knows how our minds drift, and he has a feeling for the moments, the hours and the seasons of human life.

**Raise the Titanic**, by Clive Cussler. Viking, \$8.95.

If good books were rewarded with flowers and bad books with skunk on a scale of one to five, *Raise the*



*Titanic* would deserve four skunks. The time is 1987-88, Russia and the U.S. are still at it, and we plan to resurrect the legendary ship because locked in her vault are several ounces of byzantium—no, not Byzantium, byzantium—which will enable us to construct the ultimate missile defense. Are you listening? Well, here comes the CIA and a clutch of Commie spies and our 1987 President with his basset hound followed by Hurricane Amanda and the obligatory sexual operetta and—wait! Don't go! Buffeted by icy North Atlantic clichés, drenched with reeking balderdash, will we succeed in raising the *Titanic*? Never fear. The only question is whether Hollywood will buy it.

**Leviathan**, by John Gordon Davis. E. P. Dutton, \$9.95.

*Leviathan* has been packaged for adults, but I can't tell you why. It's one of those flame-colored comic books read by children in drugstores: noble handsome Americans, evil ugly Russians, a fusillade of preposterous action with sound effects such as da-da-da-da and WHOOOOOOP, and a message that can't be misunderstood. Heroic young filmmaker Justin Magnus aided by pals slips into Yokohama harbor, blows up empty Japanese whalers—empty because he doesn't want to hurt anybody—then sails for the Antarctic to destroy a Russian whaler. He explains to his girlfriend: "Sinking that goddamn ship is the only way to stop the bastards from killing the last of the whales, Katie." Prepare for trouble, comrades. Aboard Justin's good ship *Jubilee* is a loyal picturesque patriotic crew, a helicopter, a midget sub, canisters of tear gas, thermal bombs, and riot guns equipped with rubber bullets.

Parental guidance suggested.

**Blue Skies, No Candy**, by Gael Greene. William Morrow, \$7.95.

*Blue Skies, No Candy* is pornographic garbage, uncompromisingly meretricious. After sloshing through twelve pages I gave up and skimmed the rest. A waste of time and trees. □

*van Connell is the author of Mr. Bridge, Mrs. Bridge, Points for a Compass Rose, The Connoisseur, and, most recently, Double Oneymoon.*

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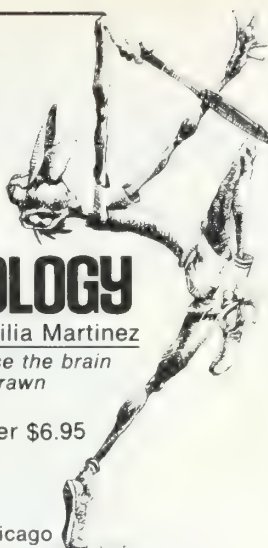
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# FASHIONS IN PORNOGRAPHY

Murder as an expression of cinematic chic

by Stephen Koch

**T**he *Texas Chain Saw Massacre* is a vile little piece of sick crap which opened early in 1974 in a nameless Times Square exploitation house, there to be noticed only as another symptom of the wet rot, another step along the way. It is a particularly foul item in the currently developing hard-core pornography of murder, fundamentally a simple exploitation film designed to milk a few more bucks out of the throng of shuffling wretches who still gather, every other seat, in those dank caverns for the scab-picking of the human spirit which have become so visible in the worst sections of the central cities. Yet, placed before its intended audience, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* was a complete failure. Unfortunately, it did not then proceed to die the death it deserved. At the last minute it was suddenly and, it would seem, inexplicably rescued by a certain branch of the film intelligentsia, who sent it sailing down the high road to fame and influence. And it has gone on to great things.

The first phase was a sudden fashion among the film buffs, some of whom latched on to the picture with an enthusiasm that suggests that film buffery, that beguiling beacon of Sixties taste, has slid into some really desperate final phase. From the buffs, the film was taken up by no less than the Museum of Modern Art, which accorded it far more than cursory interest and concern. A print was purchased for the museum's permanent collection; it was ostentatiously screened in the "Re/View" program, a museum showcase for work that has not had "the proper exposure." But with "the proper exposure,"



MOMA

things began to pick up. The film was promptly re-released commercially, amid large newspaper ads, unprecedented in my memory, proclaiming the Museum of Modern Art's endorsement in that gracious typeface so familiar from wedding invitations. "We saw the ads," a woman from the museum dryly told me. "We don't follow these things up." Yet even outright commercial exploitation of the museum's name did not dampen the general enthusiasm. When film festival time rolled around, *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* was, through the museum's prestige, explicit recommendation, and—what's the phrase?—"good

*Stephen Koch is the author of the novel Night Watch and of Stargazer: Andy Warhol's World and His Films.*

offices" pressed upon the Berlin Film Festival, which sensibly declined, and on Cannes, which gave it a highly publicized screening. The Europeans are going through their own wave of pornography, but, as usual, Americans lead the way, progressing beyond the mere skin flick into the full-fledged pornography of death. In Cannes the film naturally enjoyed a drearily predictable *succès de scandale*; that good old American *sauvage* was the talk of the town again. After Cannes came the Big Payoff: not long ago, the two fine young Texas boys who concocted this puling little atrocity found themselves in Hollywood—Hollywood at last!—signing no less than a five-picture contract with Universal Studios.

**T**AKEN ALL IN ALL, this is just another American success story, the ancient tale of exploitation, hype, and the besotted pornographic mind receiving their reward. At the end of that Sunshine Highway, many bucks, the Big Time. But the perpetrators of this film were particularly ingenious and innovative to attain their goal pursuing the improbable route of the intellectuals (well, film buffs)—the Museum of Modern Art—Cannes. Speaking of the Universal deal, the woman at the museum said, "I think we may indirectly have had something to do with that." I think she may be right. Feet on the dashboard, Coors in hand, those Good Ole Boys must have been laughing their asses off, all the way across the Continental Divide.

It was very shrewdly done: after such a history, one cannot help wondering if the film might reveal some-



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thing of unexpected value. Yet when I reluctantly went to see it at last, my only surprise was to find it even more utterly debased than I'd supposed it might be. It is a film with literally nothing to recommend it: nothing but a hysterically paced, slapdash, imbecile concoction of cannibalism, voodoo, astrology, sundry hippie-esque cults, and unrelenting sadistic violence as extreme and hideous as a complete lack of imagination can possibly make it. The film buffs like to place the film in their favorite category of improbably powerful and impressive trash. This is nonsense: the film has none of the sentimental appeal that redeems, say, *The Honeymoon Killers*. Though completely fictional, this work is best discussed alongside the so-called snuff movies, a variety of largely South American sadomasochistic pornography which bills itself, at least, as showing the actual murders of women kidnapped and then killed for the purpose of making the movie. We are here discussing something close to the absolute degradation of the artistic imagination.

I hope to be forgiven if I spare both myself and the reader any detailed discussion of *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre's* worthless content. Believe me, it is simultaneously unpleasant and unimportant. It is enough to say that the film's "idea" is to depict a human slaughterhouse run by some crazed crackers in the isolation of the Texas Panhandle. Not surprisingly, the film's rank controlling psychopathology is entirely fixated on the problem of impotence and phallicism, and the more miserable recesses of rage and self-loathing connected to them. Whether the filmmakers are aware that this is their motivation, I cannot say; but that is what their little, and I do mean little, minds have projected onto the screen. Obese gibbering castrati grasp snarling chain saws as they chase and kill screaming women; a character paralyzed from the waist down is hacked to pieces; there are self-immolations; every conceivable impulse, through hysterical necrophilia, is transposed into disgust. Meanwhile, as if it mattered, the film is quite badly made: one or two shots have a certain banal film-school chic, but just on the edge of technical competence. And though the makers have learned more or less

how to use a camera and cut film, the English language altogether defeats them, so the "script" consists mainly of screams interlarded with lines like "I told you to stay out of that graveyard!"

The film's defenders are much enchanted with what they call its "stylistic intensity." In fact, were what we see not so intolerably loathsome, its style would be comically inept. But then, its style *is* to be loathsome. Much of it is indeed all but unbearable to look at, yet this, too, is regarded as grounds for enthusiasm. "My standard for horror films is very simple," the museum official told me. "Does it really scare me? This movie really scared me." True enough, the film is frightening, and in more than one way, not least of which is the virulent social pathology in which it traffics, and which it exploits. That pathology is familiar from the imbecile degradations of the Manson phenomenon: the blood cultism, the death obsession that associates "purity" with the charnel and violence (as in Squeaky Fromme's murderous little campaign to help clean up our rivers), buoyed throughout by various diddling notions of "goodness," ranging from astrology to vegetarianism.

Yet interestingly enough, precisely a notion of artistic "purity" partly explains this foul little item's success with the film intelligentsia. Again and again, one hears praise for its "relentlessness." In some sense shoddily borrowed from the canonical principles of modernist aesthetics (especially the notion of stripping the work to its essential components, making its energy "radical," purified of all but its basic thrust), this film's raw hysteria has been mistaken for a purified energy. In fact, the film is merely intense, but that intensity is in turn mistaken for an artistic radicalism, the seizure of some pure vision. There is also a notion of freedom, liberation, involved here. Just as the surrealists (to choose one movement from the modernist canon) adored Sade, whom they absurdly supposed to demonstrate the imagination's ecstatic unfettered freedom, so the new pornography of murder acquires prestige because people actually think its hysteria has something to do with artistic liberation. The film is "intense"; because of that, it is

not recognized for the vicarious, crippled, dissociated condition it in fact manifests and exploits. Yet there is a sickening logic to this film's—and the snuff movies'—emergence in a context that grants simple intensity a preeminent artistic role. André Breton said the simple surrealist act would be to take a revolver into a crowded street and fire at random. They seem to have read Breton down in Texas.

In reality, of course, "intensity" is among the easiest and cheapest effects to achieve, especially on the screen, where the camera eliminates the audience's need to imagine what is before their eyes. High intensity can be had, as in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, without any particular talent at all. There are, after all, a great many things in the world, easily dredged up, which are perfectly hideous to look at. You just film them, you just keep banging away. The result will be intense. Meanwhile, revulsion is similarly a low-level, virtually automatic response: it too can be provoked without any artistic effort whatever. An at once stupid and lurid appeal to automatic responses: this must be one of the oldest definitions of trash on the books. Unfortunately, that does not end the matter. For it is precisely its status as trash—"intense" trash—which accounts for the other half of this picture's success with the film intelligentsia.

**T**O UNDERSTAND THIS, one must understand something about film buffery itself, its charms and pitfalls. Film buffery is really the cinematic branch of connoisseurship, and the film buffs are almost compulsively absorbed in the movie experience, and its whole crass, tender, trashy history. It involves a very special mentality: but the buffs form a quite coherent and by no means powerless subculture of the general intelligentsia, and they have played a very real role in the formation of modern taste. The buff is the committed aficionado of Tinseltown and all its works. In his happy coterie, eyes glisten at the mere thought of seeing *Broadway Melody of 1936* yet one more time the more advanced buffs have appropriated their own seats in the Museum of Modern Art's screening



room: one can point out the backs of their heads in the darkness, and their enthusiastic wranglings over the fine points of this or that moment reach high refinement. In general, the buff neither toils nor spins, but he sees; sees everything. Yet in recent times the buff has sometimes surfaced into positions of great influence. The French New Wave, for example, began in many ways as a coterie of buffs, and for many years the *Cahiers du Cinéma* was the canonical journal of buff taste. Before he went to Hollywood, Peter Bogdanovich was for some time King Buff in New York, and his current eminence is very indicative of the rise of buff taste in the so-called New Hollywood. The American Film Institute, for example, now a major commercial anteroom to the industry, is very much under the influence of buff taste.

Now, buff taste is typically hostile, or at best ambivalent, to the "serious cinema," the history of "high" film taste from Eisenstein to Ray, Bergman or Ozu. In his heart, the buff knows that the *real* achievement was, is, always will be, in Tinseltown. A first-rate portrait of the buff and buff taste appears in Gore Vidal's *Myra Breckenridge*; a standard rationale is Andrew Sarris's introduction to *The American Cinema*. Typically (Mr. Sarris is a rather untypical buff), the buff regards himself as an expert at diamonds in the rough; his life work consists in discerning masterpieces in the trashcan. Forget Eisenstein, forget—feh!—Art: the buff will explain (I improvise, of course) that there is a sixteen-second POV shot in *Saprom Syracuse* that ranks with theistine Chapel ceiling. Though usually a closet intellectual, the buff is normally in a half-defiant, half-defensive flight from what he is likely to call "intellectual seriousness," and its proposed assassination of the pleasure principle. The great cinematic apsody, he insists, is above all (a favorite word) *fun*. And so it is. Psychologically, buff taste is deeply engaged in vicariousness; intellectual, in a now very weary *trahison des cercs*: down with Kafka, up with Douglas Sirk. The buff had his great influence on taste in the middle Sixties, when the film cult in all its diversity, from Antonioni to the revered Marx Brothers to the avant-

garde began to shake up established literary attitudes about "seriousness," and the pomposity that went with them.

There can be, and there has been, something wonderfully refreshing about it all. Taken in moderation, buffery *is* wonderful fun; and from Busby Berkeley to Sternberg, from Keaton to John Huston, there *have* been a few masterpieces in that trashcan. But since the palmy days of the Sixties and its greatest influence, buff taste seems to have been steadily moving toward bankruptcy. It is a deeply, an *essentially*, sentimental taste: sentimental about the past (there she is, Jean Harlow, a dream, twenty-two, and alive) and profoundly sentimental in its rejection of the idea of authenticity in favor of the naive shiver of vicariousness, the "purity" and "intensity" of the cinematic cliché and its capsule wisdom. That attitude can occasionally function as an antidote to a dreary solemnity and sententiousness about "culture"—and be "fun," too—but it turns out to be impossible to persist very long in a commitment to inauthenticity as a positive artistic virtue. Eventually, even a refreshing

sentimentalism must become mere intellectual impotence. Trapped in vicariousness and passivity, committed to intensity rather than authenticity, to fantasy (in Coleridge's distinction) rather than the imagination, the buff's sweet sentimentalism eventually finds its outcome in pornography.

There is a terrible logic to it. Both psychologically and artistically, the invariable companion of sentimentalism turns out to be, as Vidal succinctly understood in *Myra Breckenridge*, sadism. We seem to be made that way: stick with one, and you will find yourself stuck with the other, sooner or later. And that seems to have been the direction of a substantial segment of buff taste over the last ten years. It seems an impossible trip from the rosettes of Busby Berkeley to *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, but that sickening ride from an impotent but refreshing sentimentalism to an impotent but monstrous viciousness—dreaming always of Hollywood, Hollywood—has now been made, and made with enough energy to sweep the despicable makers of this despicable little movie into the big time. □

## Solution to the October Puzzle

### Notes for "Playfair Square"

The key word is PHLEGMATIC. For beginners, here are last month's clues correctly repunctuated into instructions.

**Across:** 1. Not quite "antique," but remarkably; "old and charming" (anagram of "antique")—QUINT; 6. "Give to a prosecutor, gun"; "boats" (arm-a-D.A.); 11. "the adder" sprung; "penetrating the eye"; (anagram of "the adder")—THREADED; 12. "Fancied being" heard in "a boat" (FERRY, sounds like "fairy"); 13. "I am," "unfortunately" returning; "the meat" (I'M-ALAS, reversal); 14. "flop"; back "if," holding "a," "decoy" (F[A]ILURE); 15. "Mafia chief," third in "line"; "big chicken" (CAPO-N); 16. "passive" about "sign of victory" in "reverse" (IN[V]ERT); 18. "compelling"; "type," "producing aggregate income" (EN-GROSSING); 20. "let" outside, "soldier" has "me"; "organized into groups" (RE[G.I.—ME]NTED); 25. It's "more expensive"; going west, during "revolutionary," "period" (R[ER]AIED, reversal); 27. "barges"; into "the Gestapo," place "bossy" (S[COW]S); 28. "quiet," "one," "extremely"; "tremulous" (SH-I-VERY); 29. "resemble"; "perhaps" (BELIKE, "be like"); 30. "permission" to be "left" with "a hangover?" (L-EAVE, question mark indicates a pun); 31. "relents" redesigning, about "100"; "desks" (anagram of "relents") around "C," LE[C]THERNS); 32. Take a helping of "grits, i.e., stay"; "the rest of the afternoon" SIESTA, hidden, pun definition indicated by exclamation mark); 33. "better than just"; "prettier" (FAIRER, two meanings). **Down:** 1. "It's certainly something to be enmeshed" in an unhappy "affair" (anagram of "affair")—RAFFIA); 2. "bloom" in "love," "thin," upsetting "florid" (O-LEAN-DER); 3. "royal," "one," "five" is captivated by "the"; "flourish" (TH[R-I-V]E); 4. "pianist" is "scarlet" (CARLE, hidden); 5. "it tells you the way," "to employ more than once"; "a drink" (CHART-RE-USE); 7. "responds" by opening up "crates" (anagram of "crates")—REACTS); 8. "sail" billowing, in "West, e.g." gives "feeling of uneasiness" (MA[LAI]S); 9. "dramatize"; "modern times" to "a," "point" (A.D.-a-pt.); 10. "it covers some necks"; found in "shackles" (HACKLE, hidden); 13. "used"; "what's found on some faces to mark time" (SECOND-HAND, two senses); 17. Mars "travel in," "space" (anagram of "travel in," INTERVAL); 19. "they're not very bright"; "in" returning "taunts" (NI-TWITS); 20. "steamship employee"; recovered from "stroke" (anagram of "stroke," Stoker); 21. "arm"; "is required to," "keep" half, hidden inside (MUS[KE]T); 22. potentially "sadder"; "feelings" (anagram of "sadder," DREADS—question mark suggests the pun definition on the whole clue, i.e., isn't DREADS potentially SADDER?); 23. "hairstressers' helpers" that can't hold their "liquor" become "doctors" (remove "rye" from DRYERS and you have "Drs."); 24. bad "cold" on the end of "the nose" is "organically sweet" (anagram of "cold" on "e," DOLC-E, the organ stop); 26. "a," short "upright"; "turn away" (A-VERT.).

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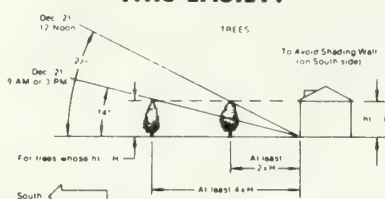
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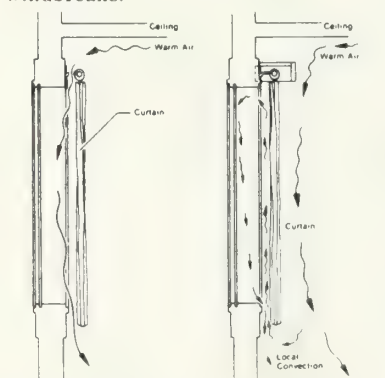
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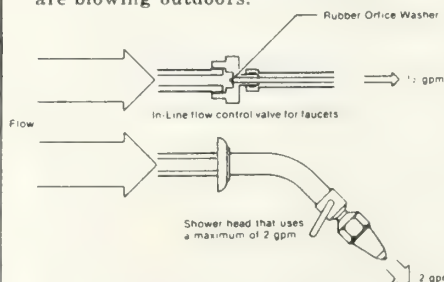
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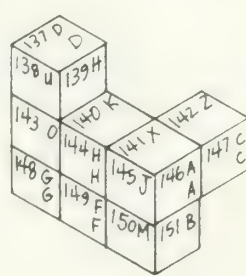
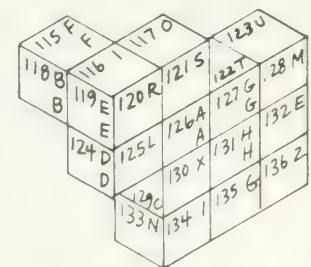
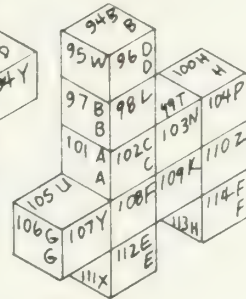
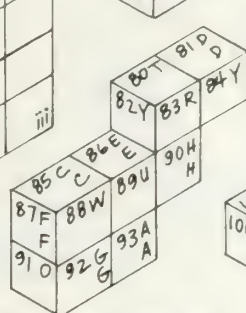
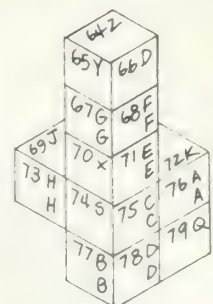
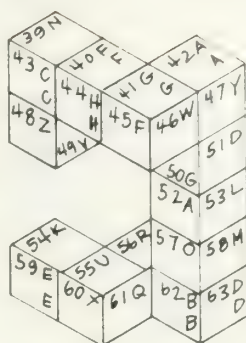
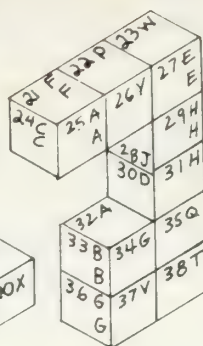
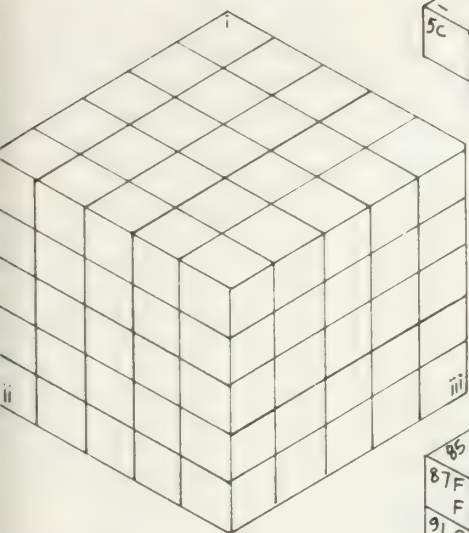
### By purchasing a new shower head.

See page 251 to learn about a widely-available shower head (costing only about \$5) that can save you \$20 a year in water costs.

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# PUZZLE



## CHINESE TORTURE

by Richard Maltby, Jr.

**This month's instructions:** Solve each clue and enter the answers on the Chinese puzzle pieces as if you were doing a normal double-cross. Mentally fitting the pieces together, you can then construct the above cube, each visible face of which will spell out a different 5 x 5-word square. Example:

The pieces fit together exactly as seen (no piece turned over or reversed or anything), and no cube is hidden. Each inner cube (you must imagine), carries the same letters as the corresponding squares on the outer surfaces; i.e., if the hypothetical bottom rear cube turned out to have E on top, D on its left face, and H on its right face, you could project that *i* was E; *ii*, D; and *iii*, H. And so on. The top face reads west to north. The word squares (taken from *Language on Vacation*) are made up of common words, except for two mildly uncommon words in the left front square, and one variant spelling in the top square. Clue answers include two proper names.

S P A C E  
L E M O N  
I N E P T  
M A N S E  
E L D E R

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 111.

### CLUES

- Look for the sound joint 158, 52, 32, 178
- Fighters' manual? 204, 168, 165, 151
- Work in a grotto—ill-advised 129, 177, 5, 201
- Save derelict vessel . . . 30, 232, 66, 51
- . . . from shadowy prow of derelict vessel 197, 239, 132, 206
- Lecher; if succeeding, dead duck 226, 10, 45, 108
- A new name in the Big Apple gets your goat 50, 135, 34, 188, 16
- For example, a pledge backing the French 31, 113, 163, 187, 139
- A dead party is alert? 229, 209, 116, 18, 134
- Mostly with ice cream on top, it's something to remember 193, 182, 145, 69, 28
- Play with one after three scruples 219, 54, 140, 72, 109
- Auditor in her audience 172, 166, 98, 125, 191, 53
- Sewer rib 196, 244, 156, 58, 150, 128

### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Chinese Torture, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by December 11. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-

year subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the December issue. Winners' names will be printed in the January issue. Winners of the September puzzle, "News Clippings," are Roald K. Wangsness, Tucson, Ariz.; Patrick Molony, Hopewell, N.J., and Nancy Hamilton, Austin, Texas.



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- P. One who scores a tombstone 8, 22, 235, 221, 155, 104
- Q. Rogues having bellybuttons in the ear 61, 19, 183, 241, 35, 79
- R. Smacked about or preserved 157, 120, 83, 210, 198, 56, 175
- S. Sailor's conjunction in grammar—in error 218, 230, 186, 12, 205, 74, 121
- T. Get a fish from her girdle 162, 245, 180, 99, 80, 38, 122
- U. Buried in print? 13, 89, 55, 225, 174, 138, 123, 105
- V. English politician pursues something that flows in the bathroom 185, 242, 213, 37, 49, 82, 15, 203
- W. Spinner has slim work-out 46, 95, 14, 88, 227, 200, 23, 152
- X. It's right to develop right arm 228, 211, 130, 111, 60, 70, 20, 141
- Y. Unappreciated? Don't be so polite! 243, 47, 26, 107, 7, 65, 84, 169, 222
- Z. Do Red Army characters shift for a humpback? 110, 2, 181, 48, 64, 136, 142, 215, 233
- AA. When a sign of damage appears inside, desert city 224, 93, 25, 101, 42, 146, 126, 220, 76
- BB. Nothing less than over a thousand grand in the red 246, 33, 77, 97, 179, 62, 192, 118, 94, 6
- CC. With medium clarity, nova can be picked out 85, 24, 171, 43, 4, 102, 240, 199, 75, 147, 164
- DD. Run down a sheep wearing chains 96, 124, 81, 63, 137, 195, 167, 78, 159, 207, 3
- EE. Got thin without care, being bigoted (*hyphenated*) 112, 1, 86, 27, 59, 176, 208, 160, 119, 231, 71, 194
- FF. To make this lock requires throttle below decks 114, 68, 87, 173, 237, 40, 202, 153, 21, 149, 17, 115
- GG. I explore every angle of merry tooting! 127, 148, 223, 106, 212, 11, 67, 154, 41, 184, 36, 92
- HH. New organization gives raise to stove workers ahead of time 236, 100, 9, 214, 73, 29, 161, 144, 131, 170, 90, 44, 189



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—American Institute of Consumer Opinion

---

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flavor of cigarettes having 60% more tar.**

---

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from across the country  
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flavor than five leading  
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\*American Institute of Consumer Opinion.  
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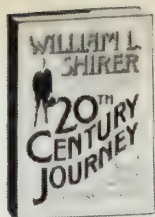
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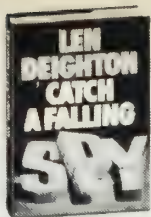
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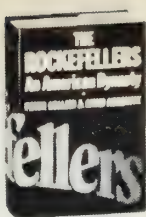




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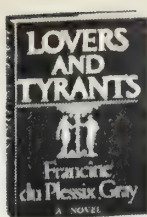
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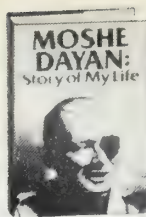
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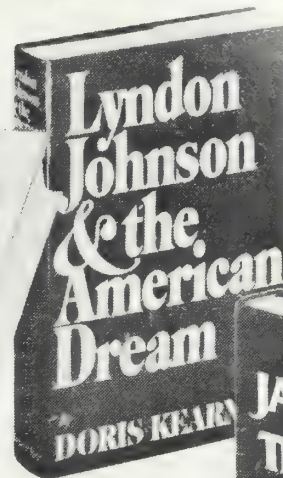
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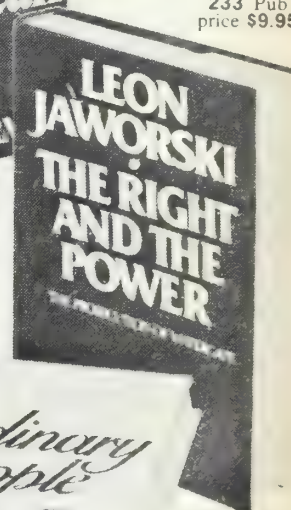
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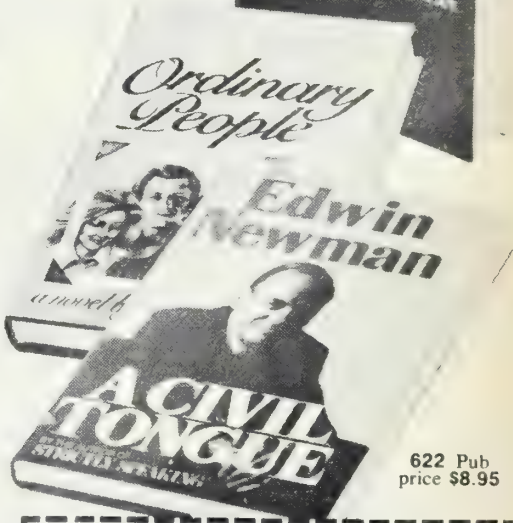
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# LETTERS

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## Relative values

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Leonard Lewin's "Ethical Aptitude Test" [October] addressed a problem that pervades virtually all facets of modern society. Unfortunately, it is all too true that "the governing principle here is that whatever is is right."

I took the article at face value on my first reading. I was genuinely interested in comparing my intuitive ethical judgments with those of a "clear-thinking" institute of experts. The "Summary of Responses" was a great shock to me, but I confidently assumed the Institute of Situational Ethics would point out the errors made by the "representative" sample of adult Americans. However, I was surprised and outraged to see that the ISE applied the governing principle of moral relativity to affirm the correctness of the consensus opinion of the sample.

As a result of my initial reaction to the article, I began to question the integrity of the staff at *Harper's* for allowing such nonsense into their previously responsible publication. In a desperate move, I guessed that maybe this was all some kind of a joke. After reading the test more carefully, I felt chagrin at ever having taken it seriously. Yet the fact that I could become so incensed by this seemingly innocent piece of humor points inescapably to the conclusion that Lewin's fictional consensus of opinion does not miss by much the actual dominant sentiment of our age. It is no laughing matter.

JACK B. HOMER  
Stanford, Calif.

Re the responses to the questions of the Ethical Aptitude Test—oh, my God.

NOREEN J. AYRES  
South Pasadena, Calif.

---

## Split verdict

---

I was delighted with "A Plague of Lawyers" [Jerold S. Auerbach, October].

For all of the reasons Mr. Auerbach sets forth and for a few additional reasons, I have come to regard the practice of the law, in which I have been engaged for over thirty years, so distasteful that I now will only rarely accept a matter which might involve any adversary court proceedings. I even terminated my practice some years ago because of my feelings, only resuming law after a hiatus of two years, because I love some elements of the practice and because I had proved, by staggering losses, that I was not a good business man. I now accept very few clients, and I almost never bill for either legal work or business advice or other type of guidance unless there is a demonstrable real value, normally to be measured on a monetary basis, consequent to my services. Although tending toward fiscal conservatism, I would be much more comfortable with a fair stipend from all taxpayers rather than from my individual clients.

I have searched my soul as to whether to permit you to publish my name and address and have concluded that my reservations in that regard were based upon fear that the American Bar Association would claim that this letter and my state-

ments herein constitute advertising, which, as of today, is generally in violation of its Code of Professional Responsibility. However, I know full well that I am not advertising for any business, and my ethics require that I stand up and be counted. Perhaps what I will have to do, however, is to ask any new, would-be client whether or not he has read this letter and, if so, then to refuse his "business." That won't be too hard to do, since I do this frequently for various other reasons.

RICHARD B. HUNT  
Jackson, Wyo.

Kudos to Jerold S. Auerbach for his superb piece. Well observed, clearly stated—though the conclusion, blaming our institutionalized contentiousness on our alleged individualism is a bit surprising.

The plague Mr. Auerbach describes would seem to infect not an individualistic people but one which has lost grip on its individuality. I villains there be, they would seem to be those judges who seem to surrender their responsible judgments as mature individuals and function as unthinking cogs in a machine crowding their dockets with complaints so palpably ludicrous that a responsible individual would dismiss them out of hand. They would also seem to be the lawyers who appear equally to have exchanged responsible individual judgment for the collective mores of a profession which dictates the acceptance of any case, no matter how trite or far fetched, if the client can pay the fee. It would, finally, seem to be the mass of humans who only too readily turn



over their responsibility as free individuals to the collective machinery of the legal system.

What Mr. Auerbach describes is not a system bearing the hallmarks of free individuals, the vision of truth, and the pride of responsibility, but a blind machinery concerned with elaborating the rules of the game rather than establishing the truth and seeing justice done. On his own evidence, I would submit that the society and the legal system he describes suffer not from a surfeit of individualism but from a dearth of free, responsible individuality.

ERAZIM KOHÁK

Department of Philosophy  
Boston University  
Boston, Mass.

Mr. Auerbach's article was nearly entertaining. However, his *allegata* were more than his *probata* could support. His thesis fell away from the sheer weight of unsupported conclusions revealing Mr. Auerbach merely grinding his axe.

JOHN ODEN

Attorney at Law  
Amarillo, Texas

### Freedom *v.* efficiency

I should like to express appreciation of Jack Richardson's review ["Systems of Belief," October] of the books by Loeb, Solzhenitsyn, and Mihajlov. He neatly puts his finger on the essential difference between their accounts and the democratic way in which "assumptions remain open to amendment and interpretation." Democracy he sees as claiming "no heritage of historical dialectic for its presence," and it is this "untidiness and inefficiency that bind democracy to human existence, and keep it from becoming another ideology in disguise."

This is so well put and so important that I would like to see this theme developed into an article written—in Jefferson's words about the Declaration of Independence—"so plain and firm as to command assent." The world needs such clarification of the philosophy of governments.

WILSON O. CLOUGH

Professor Emeritus  
Division of American Studies  
University of Wyoming  
Laramie, Wyo.

### Flight safety

We would like to commend Vic Gold's "Calling to the Yahoo" [October].

Our union, which represents 18,000 flight attendants from eighteen airlines, objected strongly to Senator Proxmire's Golden Fleece award, which he so inappropriately bequeathed upon the Federal Aviation Administration study "The Anthropometry of Airline Stewardesses."

As Mr. Gold's article pointed out, a tragic number of lives have been lost unnecessarily due to outdated, ill-fitting equipment. Flight attendants are, by law, required to be on board commercial aircraft not for performing service amenities, but rather to evacuate passengers in the event of an emergency. Passenger lives are needlessly lost when the flight attendants, upon whose leadership passengers are dependent, are killed or incapacitated.

DEL R. MOTT

Director of Safety  
Association of Flight Attendants  
Washington, D.C.

### Rainy-day discovery

The house had been empty of human sounds, other than my own, all day, and I knew I was reacting to a deep boredom when I yelled "Cat!" to my sleeping dog. Besides his frenzied barking, the only noises I could hear were the dryer tumbling clothes, a zipper or button occasionally hitting the metal sides, and the furnace blowing air through its vents.

But then a series of events occurred. I had picked up the October issue of *Harper's* at the grocery store. I read "My Lives," by Michael Holroyd. I immediately felt a conflicting restlessness. I felt a need to go to the library to look up more of his writing, and a need to stay out of the heavy rain outside and keep my feet warm. This then led me, as a compromise of sorts, to my neglected typewriter to communicate to someone (my dog doesn't react to "Holroyd!") my happiness in having discovered a fine writer.

SHIRLEE A. ANDERSON  
Los Gatos, Calif.

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# FEAR OF HEIGHTS

On the American impulse toward oblivion

by Lewis H. Lapham

**O**N THE SAME DAY that Earl Butz was resigning his office as Secretary of Agriculture I received a letter from a physician in Minnesota who had reached the conclusion that at least half the people who died of cancer in the United States probably were committing what he described as "a form of suicide." Over a period of thirty years he had become convinced that many of his patients contrived their own illness and early death. Although he presented statistics about the incidence of cancer, he thought that much the same thing probably could be said about people dying of heart disease, diabetes, cirrhosis of the liver, accidents, and emphysema. His letter encouraged me to wonder about the human capacity for self-destruction, and the spectacle of Mr. Butz in tears led me to begin the inquiry in the realm of politics.

So many politicians have gone out of their way to fall off the public stage in recent years that I wonder if they might be suffering the effects of vertigo. No matter how they explain it to themselves, or what they say to the reporters assembled for the solemnities of the farewell press conference, I cannot help but think that somewhere in the corners of their minds they know what they're doing. Perhaps they wish to escape the glare of the television lights; perhaps they become sick and desperate with feelings of remorse. Surely Mr. Butz must have appreciated the risk of saying anything, much less attempting a joke, in the presence of John Dean. Dean's reputation rests on his talent for betraying confidences, and I'm told by responsible

authorities in Washington and California that prudent men make it a point to avoid being seen in his company.

Mr. Butz presumably knew this, and yet he found himself compelled to arm Mr. Dean with the equivalent of a deadly weapon. He might just as well have followed Wilbur Mills into the Potomac River or across the stage of a Boston burlesque theater. I cannot hope to guess at these men's reasons for wanting to retire from government. Nor can I hope to guess why President Nixon made recordings of his conversations in the White House, or why Sen. Edward Kennedy went off the bridge at Chappaquiddick, or why Rep. Wayne Hays persisted in his dalliance with Elizabeth Ray.

Their misfortunes remind me of a story that I read in a newspaper last spring about Grant Keehn, age seventy-six and formerly the president of Equitable Life Assurance Society, who was granted a separation from his second wife on grounds of cruel and inhuman treatment. The judge issuing the papers felt moved to write a twenty-four-page decision in which she characterized Mr. Keehn's wife as "a grimly determined, evil-tempered woman who sought to turn an active and successful businessman into a useless and indolent creature, old before his time." The judge said that Mrs. Keehn, a Hungarian woman of romantic provenience, sought to achieve her purpose by "hysteria, screaming tantrums and . . . vicious physical violence practiced on a man thirty-one years older than she and ill-equipped

*Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.*



for fistfights with a shrieking woman." Mrs. Keehn never rose before noon, and, on most weekends, she never rose at all, insisting that her husband "(a) take her shopping and traveling, and (b) stay in bed with her, catering to her emotional and sexual needs." Mr. Keehn often arrived at his office with "massive bruises all over his body and multiple nail and teeth marks"; one morning he appeared with both his ears bitten and split; on another occasion his eye was so badly hemorrhaging that his doctors feared blindness.

**T**HE WILL TOWARD self-annihilation is a familiar human characteristic. The plays of Shakespeare and Sophocles, the history of the Roman Empire and the civil wars in Ireland and Lebanon attest to man's fondness for murdering himself. Even so, and without meaning to belittle the accomplishment of other nations in other times and places, I think it fair to say that something in the modern American spirit reveals a peculiar genius or affinity for the self-inflicted wound. What other country in the world could make a folk hero out of Evel Knievel? Or proclaim Chris Burden an artist because he had the wit to crucify himself on a Volkswagen? Or afflict itself with a Presidential campaign between two incompetent candidates, each of them relying on the other's eagerness to discredit himself?

The genius for self-destruction shows up in so many other ways that I sometimes think that the United



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States, despite the well-known rhetoric to the contrary, bears a grudge against the very idea of a future. I tend to make connections between random or miscellaneous events, and so when I read about the infant-mortality rate in Chicago or New York, I think about violence at the movies. When I read about the poisonous chemicals flowing into the James River or pass by slag heaps or wrecked automobiles, I think of 8 million people unable to find work or the enormous numbers of school-children who cannot expect to receive an education. The waste of people corresponds to the waste of every other known resource. I find further correspondences between the national levels of drug addiction and the murderous self-delusion of the Vietnam war, between 50,000 people killed every year in traffic accidents and the American investment in the international arms trade (roughly \$32 billion between 1965 and 1974), between the number of suicides among citizens aged fifteen to twenty-four (up by about 250 percent in the past generation) and the richness of the market in pornographic fantasy. In the realm of social and political ideas I notice that the current fashion in pessimism is appropriate to a literary tradition that celebrates the doomed voyager. The fervent apologists for "The End of Affluence," "The Death of Progress," or "The End of the American Future" remind me of mad Ahab embarked on his hunt for the white whale. When talking to investigative reporters about the villains they have discovered in public office I think of the shiftless private detectives played by Humphrey Bogart, all of them rejoicing in their abandonment to the pleasures of gin and disillusion. The Watergate investigations, recriminations and confessions of the last four years have come to constitute a subdivision of the entertainment industry. Almost all the principal figures in the conspiracy have published bestselling variants of the canonical text; they continue to wander through the countryside giving lectures and showing slides of their stigmata. Their publishers rely on the all but nonexistent memory of the general public, which also bespeaks a kind of self-destruction. Celebrities come and go like summer moths. With smiles of anxious self-congratulation

they pass through the lighted ballrooms of the national media, clutching their proofs of prior existence in the forlorn hope that these might prove to be somehow more useful than passports to oblivion.

Among people determined to do violence to themselves the weight of anxiety takes palpable form. It is a look in the eyes that I associate with three o'clock in the morning. I have seen it in the faces of people who talk about their prospective ruin as if they were children going to a birthday party. They mention a divorce or the loss of their children; they say that they mean to leave town, that they don't care what anybody thinks, that the weather in Stockton isn't as bad as everybody says. Something in their voices suggests that they cannot be persuaded to delay the excitement of immediate departure. Several years ago I had such a conversation with a man who had hoped to become a painter. He had had no success with his painting, and he had decided, at the age of thirty-four, to write television serials. Much to his disgust, he also had a talent for melodrama.

"Don't talk to me about it," he said, "I need the money, and for \$100,000 a year, I figure I can afford to hate myself."

I wish I had known what to say to him. Early last summer I heard that he had died of stomach cancer. I resist drawing any conclusions about the prior causes of his death, but I cannot forget the expression in his eyes. I'm reminded of it when I read in the papers that a prominent tax lawyer has fallen out of a window or that a child has been devoured by a dog.

**A**LTHOUGH I CAN'T connect these events with Mr. Butz's absence from Washington, or even with the physician's observation about the epidemic of self-inflicted illness, I understand them as being symptomatic of the same chronic ailment. I take it for granted that the body is synonymous with the mind. If there is such a thing as the American mind, and if at least part of that mind takes pleasure in destroying itself, then I would expect the body politic to show the effects of the pathological longing for catastrophe. In *Civiliza-*

*tion and Its Discontents* Sigmund Freud speaks of the ceaseless struggle, both within the individual and within the society at large, between the instinct toward life and the instinct toward death. He goes on to say:

"This struggle is what all life essentially consists of, and the evolution of civilization may therefore be simply described as the struggle for the life of the human species. And it is this battle of the giants that our nursemaids try to appease with their lullaby about Heaven."

In the United States the lullaby has a sentimental sound. I think of wistful country boys dragging their guitars through the honky-tonk bars of Southern river towns. They sing of lost love and the world's indifference. The peculiarly American forms of self-destruction follow from the national presumption of innocence. No other hypothesis takes account of so many otherwise contradictory phenomena. I have noticed, for example, that among people newly arrived on the heights of celebrity or authority the well-known fear of failure is surpassed only by the fear of success. Their freedom terrifies them, and the intensity of their excitement exposes them to attacks of conscience. Having been taught to deny the existence of their own aggressions, they sometimes find it impossible to acknowledge the satisfactions to be found in the unleashing of those aggressions. If they discover that they enjoy doing harm to their friends, children, wives, subordinates, husbands, and constituents, then how can they answer the inquisition of their Sunday school teachers? To prove that they still despise the world and all its wickedness, that they have retained in spite of everything and against heavy odds, the imaginary saintliness of their youth, they often find it necessary to cast themselves into the nearest pit.

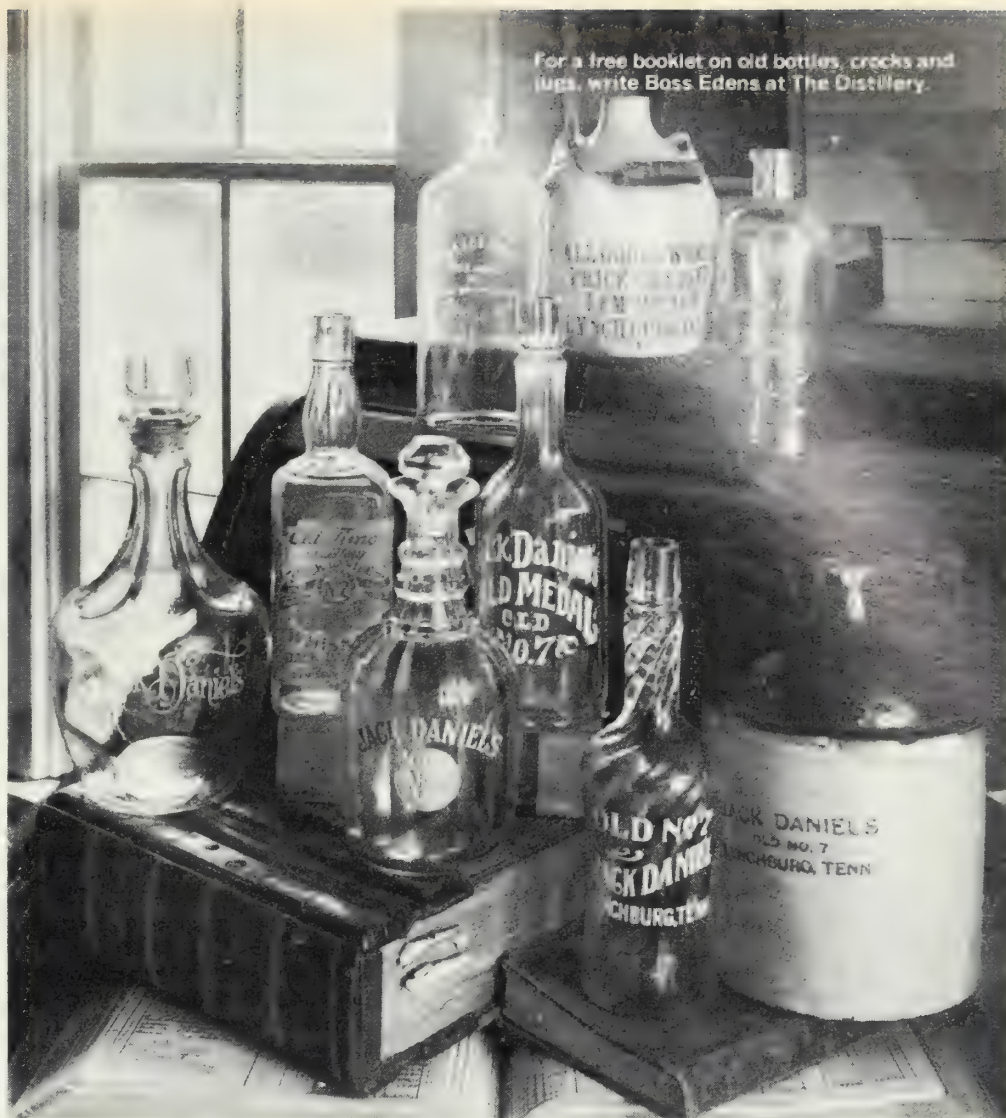
In the realm of private affairs the results in the injuries sustained by Mr. Keehn, or in the casualties reported among gamblers and stock market speculators. The same impulses can produce even more fearful effects in the realm of public affairs. The American experiment has proved so successful in the past 200 years that I can well understand the fear of divine retribution. Not only did the American people have the



courage to raise up a government on the volatile principle of freedom, but they also had the temerity to explode an atomic bomb and thereby make nonsense of the Day of Judgment. If the American mind can defy the laws of both God and Newton, then how great must be the temptation to inflict punishment on itself and return to the pantomime of childhood.

At any given moment in history, relatively few people want to protect both the idea and the fact of freedom. A great many people say that they want to do these things, but, when confronted with awkward choices, it usually turns out that they have been talking about property or the continuance of their customary privileges. Freedom is a troublesome thing to live with or sustain. The condition presupposes a constant struggling with the tyranny on the right and the anarchy on the left. I make the parliamentary division along more or less straight Freudian lines, associating the right-wing position with, among other things, the established religions, King George III, CBS News, the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, and the harsher judgments of the superego. The left-wing position I associate with the religions of the self, Nixon's conspiracy, the pornographic press, the bomb squads of the IRA, and the perversities of the id. Most people find it extremely difficult to resist the temptation, always and everywhere present, of aligning themselves with either or both of these factions.

Although I can easily appreciate the giddy excitements of giving way to those temptations, I think that they might lose some of their appeal if they could be separated from their corollary assumptions of innocence. I notice that the statisticians report an abrupt increase in the incidence of suicide and child abuse in the week before Christmas every year. Mr. Nixon and Mr. Kissinger no doubt had their reasons for bombing North Vietnam, but it occurs to me to wonder why they ordered the raid on Christmas Eve. In a country possessed of a thermonuclear arsenal, it is a mistake to believe in fairy tales. The citizens of that country can conquer their aggressions, perhaps transforming them into music or architecture, but they do themselves great harm if they pretend that the aggressions don't exist. □



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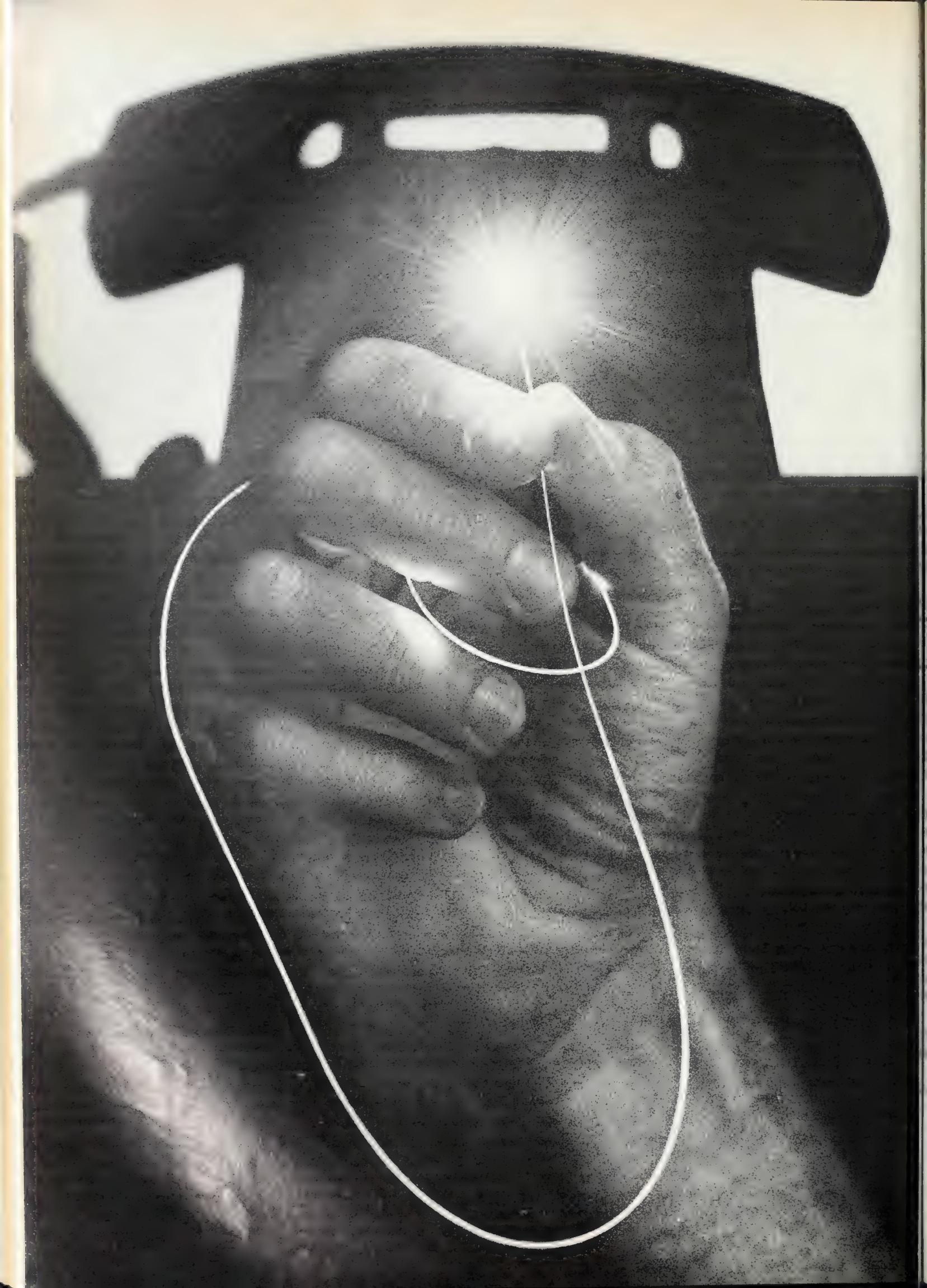
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# ARGENTINA'S COLD SEASON



On the foreshortening of governments and life expectancies

by Frank N. Manitzas

**A** RETURN TO THE birthplace of your children is an effort to seek moments of happiness in the present and faith in the future through the remembrance of days past. But today's Argentina will not offer these pleasures, as I found on my visit to Buenos Aires this September.

You do not hear boisterous talk from the Argentine. In restaurants conversation is in hushed tones. On the street, smiles disguise the horror of news about persons you know who have been kidnapped, murdered, or forced to leave. Everyone seems to be fleeing, or making plans to leave, especially the foreigners: Chileans, Bolivians, Uruguayans, Brazilians. They had come seeking refuge beneath anti-Communist banners, but refuge is no longer to be had. Argentines themselves are running for their lives. Intellectuals, as always, are suspect. Jews are in trouble; synagogues are bombed and Jewish businesses made targets for submachine-gun bullets. Even the clergy of the Roman Catholic

Church—and you must be a Roman Catholic to qualify for the Presidency of Argentina—knows no peace. Eight priests and a bishop have been killed.

From diplomats and responsible businessmen come cautious phrases, begging to be believed. You know they are only trying to convince themselves that the worst is over. Then, as you dine in the Alexandra, an excellent restaurant from the days when the British were predominant in this country's affairs, an explosion halts all conversation for ten seconds, as if a sound track had been mysteriously erased. This time it is only the backfire of a bus.

From everywhere you hear denunciations of the incompetence and selfishness of Juan D. Perón and his followers; of the politicians who filled their pockets instead of the nation's coffers; of the United States for its meddling in the past with elected governments; of the unseen but seemingly omnipresent Central Intelligence Agency; of the old Left,

*Frank N. Manitzas reports from South America for NBC News.*

the new Left, the pseudomorphic Left, the Marxists; of the old Right, the new Right, the original Nazis, the neo-Nazis; of the "international Communist conspiracy," be it real or phantom; of the military junta, quite real, received with euphoria when it seized power last March 24, now dissipating its support faster than any military government of the past. Even in whispers the denunciations are passionate. But no one seems to be in favor of anyone or anything.

I walk through the Plaza San Martín, absorbing the richness of this country of 25 million. I glance at the Circulo Militar, its 100-odd rooms once the private home of the Gainza Paz family, the owners of the conservative newspaper *La Prensa*. An unseasonable cold spell continues in the city, and I note that the jacaranda trees are not in bloom. For the armed forces, once again in power, this is a good sign, because the Argentines have a penchant for giving life to myths: "With the bloom of the jacaranda comes a coup d'état." This myth, however, is too close to the truth. The last



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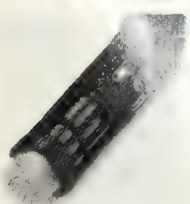




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#### ARGENTINA'S COLD SEASON

elected government to complete its term of office was that of Juan D. Perón in 1953. The succeeding eleven heads of government averaged twenty-two months in power. Perón's widow, Isabel, fell two months short of the average and remains a prisoner of the junta.

The policies of the junta to suppress "subversion" and "inflation" are those one learns to expect from an Argentine military regime. Reports of kidnapping and killing, torture and disappearance, are as normal a feature of the daily press as the price quotations from the stockyards. The beef-count made Argentina famous; the body-count is making Argentina infamous. The official kill ratio is 10 to 1: ten "subversives" for each of "their" victims. Unofficially, and closer to the truth, it is more like 30 to 1. Innocent people die as a result of action by junta security forces. Nervousness and cold fear are everywhere.

And yet this junta is described as *blando*—that is, "a soft-moderate" government in the Argentine military-political tradition. Its titular head is a fervent Roman Catholic and serious professional soldier, Army Commander in Chief Lt. Gen. Jorge Rafael Videla. No one senses a challenge to his continued rule. The main reason, you find, is that the alternatives to the junta are more frightening than the terror being unleashed today. Videla must know what is happening. He himself has barely escaped its effects—two attempted assassinations. Is it that he cannot control it, or will not? Jorge Luis Borges said of Argentina, "My country is not ready for democracy." An Argentine political scientist trying to explain the unending violence told me: "You must credit some to just *barbaridad*." Is barbarism perhaps a precondition of democracy?

**U**P CALLE FLORIDA, past the elegant shops empty of customers because of the rising prices, I walk to a lunch where I hope to find some answers. Chez Luis is a two-minute walk from the pink-hued government house, Casa Rosada. There I await my two luncheon guests. Every day they brief President Videla. Today, they will brief me also, but they are late because military

officers no longer dine publicly in uniform (at least, I have yet to see one), and the changing of clothes is not calculated into their tight daily schedules.

The officers arrive separately, although their offices are adjacent. "It is best not to travel in groups," I am told. Dressed as modern business executives, they are betrayed only by the cut of their hair. Like their President, they are American-trained soldiers. Richard Nixon might have been describing these men on his trip here in 1967: "the new breed of military."

There is talk of the cold weather, then the ordering of steak and salad and wine, to be preceded by glazed ham with pineapple, and a cautious opening of conversation.

"My personal interest is that I wish to return with my children to Argentina, their birthplace," I say. "I am concerned that with today's events"—I pause, and they nod, acknowledging the unspoken details—"that their education will be stymied."

From each, immediate protests. Rank having its privileges, the senior officer speaks first: "No, you are wrong. Argentina has always been ahead of the rest of Latin America in education. My children are in a wonderful school, learning not only English, but everything."

The other agrees: "For a hundred years, Argentina's education has been supreme. Your children will receive an excellent education here."

The good, dark red wine, Don Valentin, is served. There is a neutral toast: "To Argentina." Then I am admonished to be frank: "No question you have shall go unanswered."

The wine is excellent, and I think as I sip whether it is safe to discuss the past. Shall I mention that a year before the coup d'état I was shown the advance planning under way against the government of Isabel Perón? The same officers who had worked against the previous elected President, Arturo Illia, in 1966, were directing this campaign, but with a difference. The planning offices this time were on the main floor of the Army headquarters behind the Casa Rosada. Against Illia, when there had been a greater need for secrecy, the offices had been on the fourteenth floor. Or maybe I should men-



tion my recent conversation with Navy officers whose feeling for Perón and his supporters can only be described as hatred. I had asked a Navy captain to name the date when the planning had begun against Isabel Perón. "Twenty years ago," he said. That would mean 1955, when Juan D. Perón fled the country aboard a Paraguayan gunboat. The Navy believes the Army should never have let Perón get out alive, and it still thinks of the Army as generally too lenient.

I ask about the unity of the armed forces. Again, a quick response. "There is unity," says the younger man. The older shows a clenched fist: "Like this!" he says. There follows from each an admission that individual acts are sometimes construed as signs of disunity. They offer examples of such acts: Navy Commander Adm. Emilio Eduardo Massera, described by diplomats as the most able politician among the men in uniform, speaking "prematurely" on his recent visit to Brazil. "He never should have said that the war against the subversives has been won." Air Force Brig. Gen. Orlando Ramon Agosti promoting to a key position the Air Force officer who had led a pocket rebellion last year against the Air Force and the previous government. "A dumb mistake." Minister of Interior and Army Gen. Albano Harguindeguy insisting that terrorist groups, primarily the Trotskyite People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and the leftist-Peronist Montoneros, had been rendered ineffective, only hours before a bomb exploded in Federal Police Headquarters to kill and wound a score.

"How would he have known?" I ask.

The older officer tries to ignore my question.

"How would the general have known? Or is it true that the bomb was not the work of terrorists?"

He nods. "We really don't know who was responsible."

The federal police, 35,000 men well armed and trained, are an autonomous force. The Army is trying to bring them under its control, lest they seek refuge under another—perhaps the Navy's—banner of leadership. The federal police share the Navy's attitude toward Peronists, and toward the leftist element, which to the police means intellectuals. It is

the police, after all, who are always called on to put down the student demonstrations.

"Is there bad feeling between the Army and the police?" I ask.

A whispered answer: "They did not protect our general."

This was a reference to Gen. Cesáreo Cardozo, appointed by President Videla to head the federal police and to bring "reforms." Somehow Ana María González, a schoolmate of the general's daughter, sneaked enough explosive into his apartment to blow him to bits. Federal police were guarding the general's home, but Ana María was not captured and remains on the loose. Cardozo's successor, Gen. Arturo A. Corbetta, fared better but did not last much longer in his post. Although he, too, had orders to bring the federal police "into good and legal condition" (the Army euphemism for eliminating corruption), Corbetta was forced to resign when he tried to discipline police commanders who sought vengeance after the lethal explosion in police headquarters.

But the older officer does not want to continue on the police question. Instead he returns to the "sharing"

problem within the government. Each branch of the military ostensibly has 33.33 percent of the power and patronage. Nothing, of course, for the federal police. But the Army feels that because of its size and responsibilities its percentage should be increased. Says the older officer: "A solution is being put into effect."

I ask about the actions of the individual "gangs," often described as right-wing, patterned after the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance or "triple-A" death squads prominent during the Juan and Isabel Perón governments. These seem to offer evidence that either the junta is not so *blando* or it has lost control. "I see the automobiles without license plates, carrying the unidentifiable armed squads on, if you will excuse me, missions of death."

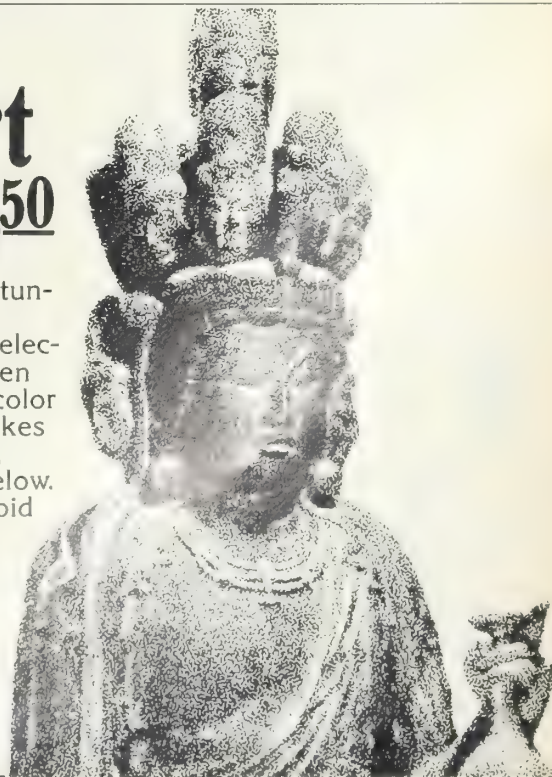
"Yes," says the younger one boldly, interrupting me. "Yes, they include members of the military and police security forces, but they are a necessity." Only a few days after the coup, various AAA hit men were welcomed with open arms into the offices of the junta's operations.

"We must act just like the United States did in Vietnam," says the

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older officer. "I was there as an observer. You did not copy the French. No white gloves slapped to the face of the enemy with a challenge to duel at noon the next day. No! You beat the enemy at his game—better trained and more ruthless, imitating and then improving on his guerrilla tactics with intensive search-and-destroy efforts. We, too, are copying the game."

"But do you think the United States won in Vietnam?"

"Ah—no. But that's only because you were afraid to use three or four *bombas atómicas*. That's all you needed."

The steak comes. The moment of truth is at hand in Argentina, I think to myself, cutting into the juicy beef which has become more expensive since the coup and less accessible to the workers. Inflation has been skyrocketing at a rate of 335 percent a year. Prices are soaring on foodstuffs, clothing, and household items. Rent controls have disappeared. Strikes are outlawed. A full-blown recession is under way because money is tight and people cannot afford to purchase.

Perhaps the economy can be brought back quickly. Argentina's rich pampas are ready to produce wheat, maize, and other grains for export. Beef exports will rise next year because of the drought in Europe. But the problem that preoccupies the junta is the one they call subversion and terrorism.

**Y**OU ACCEPT THE military's theory that the ERP and the Montoneros are fighting on but losing. These groups have been active since the late 1960s, when the President, Lt. Gen. Juan Carlos Onganía (once decorated by the Kennedy Administration for his defense of democracy), used the federal police and Army troops to put down strikes in Córdoba. That opened the door to unrestrained violence. The ERP and Montoneros, at first picked off military officers and police they believed to be responsible for "crimes against the people"—that is, against them. Then they went further, kidnapping prominent businessmen, whom they saw as tied to "the enemy of the people." Bunge & Born, an Argentine multinational company, paid \$60 million,

and Exxon another \$14 million, for the ransom of top executives held by the ERP and Montoneros. The kidnappers acknowledged they were acting against the law, but it is fair to question whether citizens must support a legal system buttressed by a government which practices its own lawlessness. I recount to my guests some episodes from earlier conversations with other Argentines.

In the luxurious suburb of San Isidro, a young woman tries in vain to find a house at night in order to return a baby carriage. She stops to ask: "Where is number 242, the house of the Bordas?" The answer is a nod to the left. "But nothing is there, just a vacant lot." The answer: "The house was destroyed last night by a bomb. Fortunately, the Bordas had left for dinner at a restaurant, and their children were visiting friends. The bomb had been placed in the children's bedroom. They lost everything, but they were lucky."

The officers only nod as I say, "Right-wing elements were blamed," so I continue with another story. Señor D is stopped on the Panamericana Highway by the provincial police while driving home from work at about nine o'clock at night. They check the trunk, the back seat, his driver's license and ownership papers. Finally, they find an envelope in his coat pocket containing 2 million old pesos (about \$80). They take that from him. He is allowed to drive away. Then he is halted by an Army patrol a few miles down the highway. Again the search. But Señor D protests: "I have no more money. The others took it." There follows a discussion as to who and where, and whether he can identify the persons involved. Señor D is requested to return with the Army patrol. At the previous checkpoint he identifies the police. An envelope with his name, and the pesos, is found. The Army patrol orders the police into the drainage ditch. As a terrified Señor D, his pesos again in his possession, drives away, the Army patrol shoots down the four policemen.

Nods of agreement. The younger officer says: "You must remember, mistakes are unavoidable. You had your Watergate. We have ours." He is so pleased with his answer that I cannot remind him who was ultimately responsible for Watergate. White

House in Washington. Pink House in Buenos Aires. I cannot be so blunt.

"Are not the courts capable of dealing with the terrorists, with those you call the subversives?"

"No," says the older officer. "To take a subversive to court is to endanger the life of the judge. He will receive a telephone call threatening not only himself but his wife and children. We know. The only way is this way. And who do you think the subversives are?"

I say that subversives are those who advocate the overthrow of a government through violence, realizing the irony in saying this to men who have acted violently to bring down four elected governments since 1955.

"A subversive," says the one to my right, "is not only he or she—remember, the women are killing too—carrying guns or throwing bombs. It also is he who writes the pamphlets, prints, distributes, and *reads* it."

The other interrupts: "That is why our educational system is so bad. For fifty years professors have been indoctrinating our children. The ideology is as much a subversive as the one who pulls the trigger." So much for their earlier endorsement of the Argentine educational system.

I ask about the moderate People's Radical Party Congressmen (Congressmen, that is, until the junta closed Congress), Sen. Hipólito Solari Yrigoyen and Deputy Mario Abel Amaya, both widely respected. They disappeared in mid-August, apparently abducted by "unidentified" armed men (who were actually from the Argentine Navy), then were "rescued" by Army troops and have since been held incommunicado in the south.

"Those two are *not* innocent," says the one to my left. "And the same applies to those priests of whom you spoke."

The junta never had said who was responsible for the death of the priests. Can it not find out? The Argentine bishops gave their answer in a protest to President Videla: "How powerful are these people who kill with such impunity and anonymity?"

The older officer says: "Providing comfort to the enemy is a subversive activity." That is why the priests were killed. And the other nods. I ask him what he means by his nod, and he answers: "When we nod, that



means we cannot disagree with what has been said."

I ask them for their definition of subversive activity. It is the same as that used by the U.S. Armed Forces—a military canon, a catchall.

"Anyone lending aid, comfort and moral support to individuals, groups or organizations which advocate the overthrow of incumbent governments by force and violence is subversive and is engaged in subversive activity," says one.

The other adds some key phrases: All *willful acts* which are intended to be *detrimental to the best interests of the government* and which do not fall into the categories of treason, sedition, sabotage, or espionage *will be placed in the category of subversive activity.*"

They await my response. Another question? I feel as if I am at catechism.

What was it the political scientist said? "*Barbaridad.*"

The older officer touches my arm and I jump as if from a nightmare. Did you read about the weapons victories?"

I nod. He smiles, continuing: Everyone arrested—a foreigner. It proves there is an international conspiracy."

"But the weapons used by the *subversivos* are those they have stolen—or purchased—from the Argentine Armed Forces," I say firmly. "That's the way it was. But we have stopped that. Now they must make their own. And we must stop it. But the conspiracy is directed from abroad—from Paris."

I cannot hold back my smile. Buenos Aires's Old World architecture and cultural life for so long made this capital city of 10 million "the Paris of the Americas" that now she supposedly importing her violence as well as her fall fashions from Paris.

"It is true," he says, not smiling. For five minutes they try to convince me that the Communists are waging a campaign for control of the South Atlantic, that Angola was a last phase of the plan, and Argentina next. The presence of Communists in the South Atlantic, they say, "motivates a new approach to the strategic situation." I protest, whereupon the older officer says it should be enough for me—"as a patriotic American"—to know that Rear Adm.

James Sagerholm, Commander of South Atlantic Force 138, which participated in joint maneuvers with the Argentine fleet (the UNITAS XVII exercises), had been quoted in that day's edition of *La Nación* as saying that a new strategic approach was needed in the South Atlantic.

I know how these Argentines are forever seeking justification in the words of U.S. military officers, regardless of whether those words express U.S. policy. I remember a plea at 5:00 A.M. by the U.S. Army attaché as I was writing my story for the Associated Press on the overthrow of the government of Arturo Frondizi in March 1962.

"But you can't call it a 'military dictatorship'! They are saving Argentina from Communism," said the major, who will never admit he was wrong, and who is now a general.

And I remember when U.S. Ambassador Edwin Martin, alone in his Embassy, fought to maintain the elected government of Arturo Illia in 1966. The military attachés, and those omnipresent "others" were working hard to "save Argentina from Communism." One day the Army attaché escorted a senior Argentine officer to the Ambassador's residence to explain "why we are moving against Illia." Martin never acknowledged the Argentine. He just kept looking out the French windows at the bright moon, saying: "Have you ever seen such a peaceful sight? Where else but in Argentina?"

You can talk to U.S. diplomats now, and they will tell you, if you don't quote them: "You know Frondizi had his faults, but he wasn't that bad. And Illia—why, that was probably the best government Argentina ever had. You know, I don't understand really what happened."

I look at my luncheon guests and smile. I throw up my hands in surrender. They nod, and smile back.

Dessert is whipped sabayon. Then coffee. As they leave, I write in my notebook: "Too much fixation on procedure. No individual thought on actual, changing situations. There is a chance—a small chance—that if men like these start to think, and feel, the country might yet pull out of it. But the odds remain that Argentina will continue to build on its reputation as the country with the most living former Presidents.

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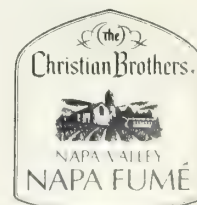


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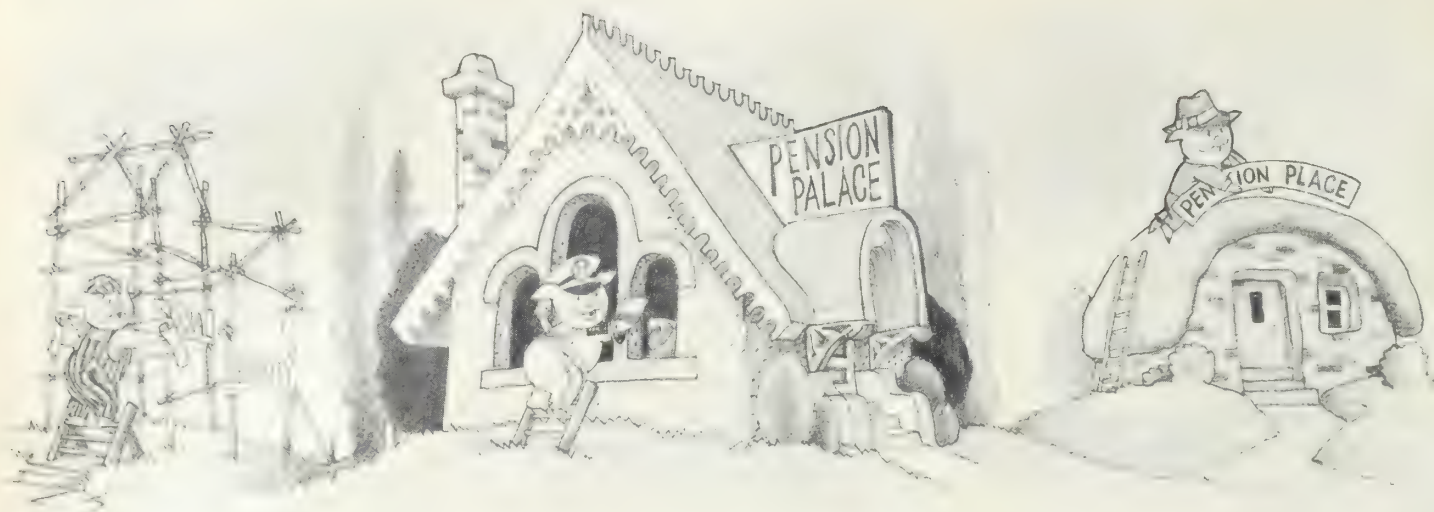
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# THE BURDEN OF GENEROSITY



## Our hidden national debt

by Les Aspin

**L**AST JANUARY a chief petty officer in the Navy retired from the service. He is now receiving a pension of just over \$100 a week. The man is thirty-five years old and served barely more than eighteen years in the Navy. In New York City, a bus driver on a \$13,000 salary retired on a \$15,600 pension.

The pensions of many government employees are exceedingly generous, especially when compared with pensions in the private sector. For example, a New York City teacher who retired last year, after a thirty-year career and a \$15,000 final salary, receives, at the very least, 65 percent of his final salary in retirement benefits. A steelworker making the same salary, working the same number of years and retiring the same day, gets only 27 percent.

Not all public pensions are as generous as the Navy man's. He took advantage of a loophole to retire after eighteen years instead of the military's usual twenty years. The New York City bus driver also took advantage of a loophole: knowing his pension would be based on the earnings of his final working year, he exerted himself to the point of accumulating an average thirty-five hours a week in overtime. That kind of commitment to retired city

employees has contributed mightily to New York's continuing financial predicament.

**T**HE BURDEN OF public pensions extends far beyond New York, however. Across the country many local governments are behaving as if they could indefinitely defer coming to grips with pension promises. A recent survey of forty-four Pennsylvania cities, for example, revealed that more than three-quarters lacked adequately funded pension accounts. Even assuming these accounts earn a reasonably high rate of interest, they still fall short of the cities' pension indebtedness. And not all pension funds have been wisely invested. The \$2 million fund in Albany, Georgia, to take just one case, averaged a dismal 1.1 percent return per year during the boom years 1960 to 1971.

The Pennsylvania survey uncovered an incredibly lax attitude on the part of city administrators. Some cities used money which should have gone into pension funds for routine operating expenses. Some simply paid into the fund whatever was left over in the city budget. The time will come when these and other cities will have to choose between defaulting on obligations and raising taxes, a specter that already haunts New York.

These developments are a direct result of public inattention. Pension make for dull political conversation unless one's own retirement happens to be at issue. Politicians intuitively understand and exploit this fact. A government pension boost will mollify a large voting bloc (one out of every five working Americans is now on the public payroll) without arousing the general electorate. A pension improvement is basically a promissory note. It defers much of the burden to future taxpayers. Thus a canny legislator may boast to public employees that he has sweetened their retirement, while simultaneously assuring his constituency that he never once voted to raise taxes or increase the national debt.

Lobbyists for government employees play a game with pensions that seems cloaked in complicated moves and strategies. With experience, however, one sees that the pension game reduces to four basic gambits.

**The contribution gambit.** In private pension schemes, management or employees or both pay into a fund. The amount is based on actuarial calculations which take into account the number of people who will be drawing on the fund and their average life-span. A 1974 federal law requires that all private pensions be fully covered by such a fund, but it says nothing about government pensions. So when public employees win extra benefits, the additional

*Les Aspin, a Democratic Representative from Wisconsin, serves on the House Armed Services Committee.*



money need not be pumped immediately into the funds. The taxpayer will pay for it later.

*The high-year gambit.* A pension that is half the salary paid in the final working year will be larger than a pension that pays half the average earnings over the final five years. Pensions can thus be improved simply by cutting the number of years that go into the calculation. At one time a New York City teacher's pension was based on the five highest-paying years. Now it's a percentage of the final year alone. The difference for teachers who retired in 1975 was a pension larger by 12 percent.

*The length-of-service gambit.* Private plans are generally geared to retirement at age sixty-five. If you retire early, you receive a smaller pension because it is expected you will be drawing from the fund for a longer time. Public pensions tend to be more flexible. Even sixteen years ago a New York City teacher could get a full pension payable at age fifty-five, although he had to have worked in the system for thirty years. Now most teachers can get a full pension at age fifty-five after only twenty-five years' service.

*The cost-of-living escalator gambit.* In more than 97 percent of all private pension plans, the retiree gets the same monthly pension regardless of how long he lives and how much inflation eats away at his pension. As many older retirees have found, what was an adequate pension in 1956 barely buys the necessities in 1976. Government pension schemes, however, usually include automatic cost-of-living escalators. Lobbyists for New York City employees have not yet won this feature, but they have tried.

Of all pension plans, probably none is better than the military's. Unlike New York City teachers and many other government employees, the serviceman has nothing deducted from his wages to fund retirement. His pension is not based on the three best-paid working years or even on the final year, but rather on the final paycheck, which prompts many to time their resignations with a pay raise. He may retire at any age on a full pension after only twenty years of service. And he shares with other federal retirees the most generous cost-of-living escalator anywhere in the nation.

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For decades servicemen were considered to be badly underpaid. The government held out a generous pension to offset the poor salaries. But in the 1960s Congress decided that military pay scales should be substantially upgraded, to achieve parity with those of civilians. At that time Congress might logically have reviewed the pension system, but chose not to. Today, in the words of the Defense Department itself, "The current system provides excessively liberal benefits when compared with most civilian sector plans."

The average officer retiring this year is a forty-six-year-old lieutenant colonel receiving a pension of \$15,400 a year; his opposite number in the enlisted ranks is a forty-one-year-old Army platoon sergeant getting \$6,400 a year. These retirees continue to enjoy, among other benefits, subsidized medical care, military commissaries with cheaper food, and free aircraft flights.

Pensions alone will absorb 8.5 percent of the defense budget this year, or \$8.4 billion. Only twelve years ago pensions consumed 2.5 percent of the defense budget, or \$1.2 billion. By the year 2000 the annual pension bill for the military is projected to be about \$34 billion. Liberal critics of the Pentagon who lambaste the cost of the B-1 bomber should realize that military pensions consume five-and-a-half times more money in this year's budget. Fiscal conservatives, horrified at the \$600 billion national debt should realize that federal pension obligations constitute a separate debt of more than \$300 billion. For whatever reason, that figure is rarely included in public discussions of the nation's indebtedness. It is our hidden national debt. As Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton recently warned, "Unless we act now, in future years the classic question of economic priorities could become 'guns or pensions.'"

**W**HILE THE MILITARY and other public employees are enjoying generous pensions, 70 percent of all U.S. citizens sixty-five and older now receive no pension and are living on Social Security and savings alone. Only half of the current work force is covered by any pension scheme. Clearly, as we are

concerned about the distribution of income among the working population, so must we pay attention to the distribution of income among the retired population. Partly because of the tax structure, many government employees actually command greater purchasing power as retirees than they had as salaried workers.

Robert J. Tilove has calculated in his study *Public Employee Pension Plans* that a married worker earning \$20,000 a year needs only a half-pay pension at age sixty-five to maintain the same purchasing power he had the day before retiring. In addition to the pension, he and his spouse will get Social Security funds, which are tax free; they can double their tax exemptions in retirement; they will be in a lower tax bracket; and their contributions to Social Security and the pension plan have ended. Because Social Security is weighted to benefit the lower-paid, a married man earning \$10,000 before retiring at sixty-five would need only about a one-third pension to maintain the same purchasing power.

Of thirty-three state government pension schemes which can be charted, only six offer a pension of less than 45 percent after thirty years' service. Louisiana has the best pension scheme—75 percent plus \$300 after thirty years. When the Louisiana legislature sought to limit the combined benefits from state pensions and Social Security to 100 percent of salary, a near mutiny erupted among public employees, and the bill went down to defeat.

The lavishness of many public pensions comprises not only the size of the check at age sixty-five, but also the minimum age for eligibility. Bankers Trust Company of New York studied 271 private pension plans, covering about one-quarter of all people included in such plans, and found only thirteen that provided for normal retirement before age sixty-five. Most of the plans permitted employees to retire earlier, but with a reduced pension. Only 8 percent of the plans with an age requirement gave a pension to anyone under fifty-five years old. Contrast that with the average military man receiving full retirement pay at the age of forty-two. And consider how the life-expectancy factor magnifies the discrepancy. The average couple retiring at sixty-five on Social Security this

year can expect to receive \$69,000 over the rest of their lives, assuming there is no change in the rates. The average enlisted man retiring this year will get \$143,000 before he turns sixty-five, the average officer \$283,000.

To state the case another way: the average enlisted man with twenty years in uniform before retirement will receive pension checks over the years amounting to 132 percent of all he earned while working, the average officer 144 percent. These are conservative figures that allow nothing for future cost-of-living increases. A retired civilian, by comparison, will collect 20 to 30 percent of his twenty-year earnings in retirement, a federal civil servant about 49 percent, a New York City schoolteacher 106 percent, and members of Congress, who aren't noted for shortchanging themselves, 49 percent (all based on twenty working years).

The pension burden grows more serious every year, and Congress has yet to ask itself some basic questions. Should military personnel qualify for large pensions after only twenty years in the service? Should they be allowed to receive the larger pension if they retire immediately after a pay raise? When raising a group's pension, should we grant percentage increases or flat dollar pay boosts? (A 5 percent increase means one thing for someone making a Congressman's salary and another for a clerk or mechanic. Should we not hold governments at all levels to the same standards we have set for the private sector, by requiring them to pay into a retirement fund whatever pension obligations they have assumed? When we decide to use tax revenues to improve pensions, should we fatten the pensions of civil servants, military careerists, and Congressmen, or raise the Social Security benefits for people who have no pension at all?

In recent years, we as a nation have acquired a new sense of social responsibility to the aged. There is no reason to back away from that commitment. It is becoming imperative, however, that we examine the pension problem in detail, pay heed to its economics, and consider whether we are not founding and funding a privileged elite among our retirees.



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# DOG DEATH AFTERNOONS

Notes from the entrepreneurial fringe

by Tom Engelhardt

**T**HE FIRST MORNING of the fifth annual convention of the National Association of Pet Cemeteries is under way. Fred Miller, the owner of a large Midwest pet cemetery, has a great new idea he wants to pass on to his fifty colleagues in the Gold Room of the San Francisco Holiday Inn: Advertise! "We should sell pre-need lots like the human-cemetery business does," he says emphatically. "I met a human-cemetery owner from Philadelphia who did a survey showing they could make more money per square foot from animal than human burials. He advertised in the newspapers. He offered a two-by-three-foot plot, a twelve-by-six-inch plaque, and a fiberglass casket for \$390. A terrific deal. From one ad they got \$8,000 worth of business. This is money. This is no joke. If it works in Philadelphia, it'll work anywhere in the country."

A Florida pet-cemetery owner stands up to urge his fellow owners to bring their language in line with "where the cemetery industry is today. We don't say 'ashes' anymore; we say 'cremains.' We don't say 'digging a hole'; we say 'opening and closing the burial estate.' We don't take them there in an 'ambulance' or a 'hearse,' but in a 'funeral coach.'"

I had expected the convention to be high powered. Instead the atmosphere is folksy, the audience middle-aged, the jokes incredibly flat. The Gold Room is much too large for the gathering. Everyone is disappointed at the turnout. "It's not a primary industry," someone explains apologetically.

Although there are an estimated 420 pet cemeteries in the United



Elliott Erwitt/Magnum

States, this convention is so small that everyone stands up and is introduced by name, including the salespeople who are manning the casket, plaque, and tombstone exhibits which line the walls. I feel as though I've stumbled in on a meeting of mom-and-pop grocery-store owners at the dawn of the age of hucksterism. Though six out of every ten American households own pets,

*Tom Engelhardt is the author most recently of Beyond Our Control: America in the Mid-Seventies.*

only 1 to 2 percent of those animals are ever buried in a pet cemetery. As a result, the pet-cemetery business is staffed by aging small entrepreneurs hanging onto the edge of the twentieth century by their fingernails.

At ten-thirty, a break is announced. I get up and circle the room. On the table devoted to Lifetime Aluminum Pet Markers, a sample plaque says, "If Christ would have had a little dog, it would have followed him to the cross." Other exhibits display pet caskets with billowing white and purple satin inner linings and frilly little pillows. At the table nearest the door, a salesman offers small "you can't take it with you" piggy banks which, he tells me, can double as urns.

Adlai Wheel, Sr., buttonholes me. He's the oldest cemeterian at the convention. "Want to hear some burial stories?" he asks. He takes my arm and escorts me to a corner of the Gold Room, nodding to various younger cemeterians who greet him respectfully as we pass. He's short, has gray hair and a trace of a moustache, and wears a cowrie-shell string tie. He runs Pet Haven, a seven-acre cemetery in Syracuse, New York, where 5,000 pets have been "laid to rest."

He remembers that he was clipping a dog at the exact moment in 1929 when a woman first told him about a pet cemetery in Hartsdale, New York. The idea fascinated him. "When I started in 1930, times couldn't have been worse. A banker told me: 'This is the most insane idea I ever heard of.' In those days we buried the pet in a redwood casket for \$15." Now the cheapest he offers is a plastic-bag burial for \$22.50. The most costly he can re-



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member was \$2,500, for thirty-four poodles buried in two circles around an evergreen tree.

He hurries through my questions, eager to get to his burial stories. Each has a title ("The Corpseless Grave," for instance) that sounds like something out of Sherlock Holmes or the *Just So Stories*. "Winky Whiskers" comes last. Winky Whiskers, a cat, belonged to a "lady of wealth" who, at the time of the depression, lost everything. She also had a "malignancy" and, knowing she was going to die, sent the cat to Adlai Wheel's boarding kennel. "You have to understand," he says, "the only real companion she had to love was this little black-and-white cat. Believe it or not, that cat died only a short while after she did. Fortunately, her attorney and an old lady friend were in Syracuse and attended its funeral. Winky Whiskers," he concludes, "only a black-and-white cat, but greatly loved." He ends all his stories this way, as if he were using tombstones for cue cards.

Edie Lally of KTR products is standing by her casket exhibit. She's wearing a velvety black pants suit. She talks to me in a whisper as if there were a dead person nearby. It's her third year in caskets. Her cheapest model sells for \$10.75 and looks like a giant, flattened-out styrofoam cup. Her most popular model, a twenty-four-inch redwood casket, goes for \$18. She sold seventy-five of them last year. Each year, she tells me proudly, business has doubled.

"It's middle-class people who are really into burying their pets," she says. "Some of them—their children are grown up, they're all alone. Why, I've seen them carry on more for pets than for people in their own families! Remember, people bury people because they have to; they bury pets because they want to!"

**A**NICE DAY FOR a funeral. Rain has been pelting down since five in the morning. Our group stuffs itself into a single Gray Line tour bus. Everyone complains about how much more comfortable it would have been if we had two buses, but these cemeterians have saved their nickels and dimes too long to be com-

fortable splurging now on a second bus. For a small-business person, cutting corners is a hard habit to break.

Josephine Sheehan, sitting next to me, is the manager of Long Island's Bide-A-Wee Pet Memorial Park, where 50,000 pets are buried. She is the only salaried person I've met at the convention; everyone else owns his own cemetery. Bide-A-Wee's claim to fame is that Checkers, the cocker spaniel which catapulted Richard Nixon into the Vice-Presidency, is buried there. "One of the first things people ask is 'Where is Checkers?' or 'Can mine be buried in the same section as Checkers?'"

"Sometimes I hear people say, 'I don't visit my family's grave as much as I come here.' They get so involved with their pets they even faint in our office. And we bury anything. We've buried a grasshopper named Gary, horses, monkeys, parrots, all types of birds including sea gulls, even a bush baby."

"We buried a 400-pound pet pig recently!" says Carol Caprita, the association treasurer.

"You know," says Ms. Sheehan, "people come to a convention like this thinking they can get rich overnight, but a pet cemetery is a life-long project. There's more to it than a shovel and a plot of land!"

"It takes at least ten years of dedication just to get a little pocket money," adds Carol.

We're now approaching Colma, first stop on our tour of Bay Area pet cemeteries. Colma, San Francisco's suburban city of the dead, has 500 living inhabitants who supervise a population of 2.5 million dead souls distributed in seventeen cemeteries. "Pretty soon you'll notice that we'll be surrounded by cemeteries," announces Phil C'deBaca of Colma's Pet's Rest Cemetery. "We like to say we have more headstones per square inch that anywhere else in the world."

For me, this outing has seemed so ordinary, it's just beginning to sink in that we're on a tour not of landmarks but tombstones. However, I'm the only one who seems bemused by the idea. The cemeterians are in high spirits. As we pass between fields of crypts, tombstones, and grave markers, they banter back and forth among themselves. Phil points out the Colma golf course and adds that it's being reserved for future

cemetery expansion. There is laughter, then a yell from the back of the bus: "If someone dies on the eighteenth hole, we'll just bury him there!"

It's drizzling as we disembark at Phil's cemetery. To avoid the wet grass, I initially step on the flat gravestones, thinking them a flagstone path. Trailing the main group, I begin to read epitaphs. "Beloved Zsa Zsa, God loaned us you." "Penny: She never knew she was a rabbit." "Rocky... An overnight sleep, then we shall be together again." My initial reaction is laughter, but all around me on this extended lawn, people are engaged in vigorous shop-talk. An elderly man rushes past. "What are these," he shouts, "cremains?" He points at a "wall" for cremated remains which looks like a set of fading post-office boxes.

When we return to the bus, I switch seats to talk with Fred Miller. He runs the AAA Pet Service Center in Taylor, Michigan. A thirty-acre complex, it includes a "dog and cat motel," a "canine college," a "canine beauty shop," and a pet cemetery. His business seems practically unique in the pet cemetery world, since he claims it makes lots of money. He estimates that his overall profit averages \$70,000 to \$90,000 a year, the cemetery making up 40 percent of that total.

Fred Miller is sixty-five. He wears a 1940s fedora and has a thin, weathered face. He tells me he was once in the human-cemetery business. "Out of hundreds of pet cemeteries around the country only the top few are moneymaking operations. Most are really labors of love, hobbies. As long as they're just side businesses, they'll never develop their full potential. Potentially, it's the biggest growth industry in the country. A multimillion-dollar business. But the average cemetery only gets one or two burials a week, that's maybe \$12,000-15,000 a year, which is why you find some guy's wife doing it and he's working at a factory."

Fred leans over, draping his arm around my shoulder, and says confidentially, "Most of these people aren't business people at all. They're not even educated. You see, we have no school to learn what a pet cemetery should look like, so everybody has to be an innovator. This is why I talk to them. I'm an innovator, see,



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trying to discover new ways of making a dollar."

Fred is proud that he "invented" the Farm Burial program ("a meat business," he calls it), in which dead pets picked up from vets' freezers are mass buried very cheaply. He feels that farm burials plus advertising for pre-need lot sales are the key to "a real cash flow" in the pet cemetery business. "Then the big boys will move in from the human cemeteries and these small people will be flushed out, just like when the chains took over mom-and-pop grocery stores. Why? Because they're dead at the switch. They're not solving the problem! You know, it takes courage to go out and spend \$700 to \$800 on an ad in a newspaper. These people, they come unglued. They play it so close to the chest that they're not geared up for it emotionally."

We bus on to Contra Costa Pet Memorial Cemetery, munching on Kentucky Fried Chicken box lunches. It's an officeless plot of land dotted with little bronze vases attached by chains to underground anchors. Each vase has been carefully filled with plastic flowers. It's still drizzling, so almost no one leaves the bus.

I seat-hop to sit next to Pat Blosser, the founder of the National Association of Pet Cemeteries. Pat runs Paw Print Gardens outside Chicago. Her husband has his own business putting up acoustical ceilings. Her motto is "Do it with DIGNITY." She has a hive of stark red hair and is wearing a mauve pants suit. She's very vigorous. As we pass some giant industrial freezers she suddenly exclaims, "Just look at those freezers! I could get sixty dogs in them!" Then she laughs and mutters, "Always business."

"I've buried pets since I was a little kid," she says. "See, I came from a large family and we had pets galore. We'd do it in a little-kid fashion—an old box, slats for a cross, flowers from my mom's garden. I always thought someday I'd like a real cemetery, though." Pat attributes the growing popularity of pets to the birth-control pill. Fewer kids mean more surrogates, she tells me. Furthermore she says that pet owners are increasingly interested in being buried with their pets. She already has nine people who have made "their reservations" by buying

plots next to their pets. (They have to be cremated first in a human cemetery.) She's worried, though, that this trend may backfire. If the human-cemetery business discovers what's going on, there may be hell to pay because "our price is so cheap compared to burial in a human cemetery."

Like her compatriots, her tendency is to lie low, stay small, and hope no one notices her. It's the technique of the tiny entrepreneur pushed to the infertile fringes of the American economy. Pat knows instinctively that the very fringe quality of her existence is also its saving grace. For if it suddenly appeared that a significant percentage of America's pet owners could be convinced to bury their pets, the corporate undertakers from the human-cemetery business would, as Fred Miller says, "flush these people down the drain."

The bus is slowly winding its way up a small mountain toward the country's largest pet cemetery, the fifty-acre Bubbling Well Pet Memorial Park. Overlooking the beautiful Napa Valley, Bubbling Well has carefully sculpted grounds with three ponds. It was opened in 1972 by Cal Harberts, who, according to his own handouts, was a top salesman in the human-cemetery business. He leads us from his house to the Garden of Honor (for police dogs killed in the line of duty), the Garden of Companionship, the Garden of Gentle Giants (for Saint Bernards and Great Danes), Kitten Corner, and the ritziest site of all, the Garden of Devotion. As we walk, Harberts, an expansive man, points out the farm burial areas, where 42,000 pets are mass buried.

The rest of the group moves on to the main house for a short wine-tasting party, but I stop in the chapel and flip through the Guest Book where bereaved visitors write their comments: "Jojo next to heaven here"; "Dimples, rest well"; "Now I won't worry about the hereafter for my aging pet"; "Sleep soundly, Ricky, with beautiful friends."

**O**N THE TRIP BACK to San Francisco, people are exhausted. We've been traveling for over seven hours, and some of the cemeterians are already asleep. Phil C'deBaca, how-

ever, is still raring to go. At thirty-two, he's probably by ten years the youngest cemeterian on the bus. He has a Fu Manchu mustache and a quick, warm grin. He and his wife were living on a farm in New Mexico raising pigs ("My goal in life is to achieve self-sufficiency on that farm") when his father-in-law called them back to help manage the cemetery in Colma. Now he's temporarily settled there, a member of the San Mateo County Solid Waste Advisory Committee, and was involved in Tom Hayden's Senatorial campaign.

"I get a lot of flack from friends and strangers alike, but I look on that cemetery as a necessary service. A pet's not like a toaster, where you consume it and throw it away. Animals respond to the stimulus of people, so what these people are really doing is burying a bit of themselves. Now I'm trying to redirect the attitude of the cemetery to allow for the little old lady who is on a fixed income. I want to set it up so that the cemetery is manageable, so people can make their \$5-a-month payments and we can still survive. It really gets to you, these people who don't have anything when you go to their apartment except that little dog, and it's dead. I have a lot of idealistic goals, but my father-in-law wants to go along just like we are."

"I don't care what people at this convention say about 'funeral coaches'; people who bury pets don't want one. They want an unlabeled vehicle so the neighbors won't think they're crazies. Basically, what they want is some reassurance that they're not going off the deep end. They're so emotionally upset that you could really stick it to them. You could say, 'Such a fine dog deserves a beautiful casket,' but I say, 'A simple pine box is okay.' After all, all they're doing is going back to earth. Twenty years from now, there'll be nothing left, just another dog on top of them. That's the concept of recycling, and I like it."

While we talk, someone grabs the mike and begins to sing songs like "Deep in the Heart of Texas" and "You Are My Sunshine." Others join in. As we cross the Golden Gate Bridge into San Francisco, those who are awake launch into a hearty round of "Oh, Where, Oh, Where Has My Little Dog Gone?" □



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# IRELAND WILL NOT HAVE PEACE

The romance of failure presupposes the necessity for continuing bloodshed

by Conor Cruise O'Brien

**O**N THE RADIO I HEARD a prominent New York politician of Irish origin explaining the killings in Northern Ireland. The Irish Republican Army was a band of freedom fighters. The struggle was the age-old one of Ireland against Britain.

The interview was on a transatlantic line. The interviewer was an Irish girl, from the Irish national broadcasting station. She was aware that something was missing from this picture. "What about the Protestants of Northern Ireland?" she asked.

The politician was bland. The Protestants in question were very fine hardworking people. They would, in his opinion, have a magnificent contribution to make to a United Ireland. In that case, the interviewer wanted to know, why didn't these Protestants make this contribution, by actually joining a united Ireland? The answer was simple: The British. The British were preventing the Protestants of Northern Ireland from joining a United Ireland.

Now, this particular politician is neither naive nor ignorant of Irish realities. He knows that Ulster Protestants, by an overwhelming majority, have for generations asserted their will to remain in the United Kingdom. He knows of their deep-rooted aversion to being incorporated in a united Ireland, which in their view would be a Catholic-dominated state. He should also know of Britain's declaration at Sunningdale (1973) that Britain will not oppose the unity of Ireland, if a ma-

ajority in Northern Ireland come to support that, and of the corresponding declaration by the Parliament in Dublin that the unity to which the Republic aspires can only be achieved by the free consent of a majority in Northern Ireland. He certainly knows that the initial deployment of British troops, in a law-enforcement capacity in Northern Ireland in August 1969, was for the protection of Catholic minorities against Protestant majority violence, including the violence of the largely Protestant local police.

The politician's version of a complex and exceedingly dangerous reality was grossly distorted and oversimplified. But that very distortion is an important part of the reality, for it helps to keep the IRA alive and to attract recruits and above all money to its cause. Of course, the farther away from the scene you are, the more plausible and the more attractive the myth can be made to appear. It is easily and quickly grasped, and it appears to be fitted with a simple and entirely satisfactory solution: "Brits out." The myth demands virtually no cognitive or other intellectual effort, permits unlimited righteous indignation, and requires, on the part of people living far away from the scene, no risk and only small, occasional financial sacrifice, to be transmuted into human sacrifice 3,000 miles away. The news of the result can be a thrill for which no guilt need be felt, since the blame for all the deaths, by the rules of this horribly simple game, lies at the door of the ancient

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enemy. The angry response of certain Irish-Americans to any attempt to discuss the realities of the question has I think to do not so much with love for Ireland—certainly not in the sense of loving the actual Irish who live there—as with the natural human tendency to resist any intrusion on a system of satisfying fantasies.

### The unpopular revolutionaries

**F**OR THE IRA ITSELF, as well as for its American supporters, the idea of Ireland is an abstraction altogether too precious to be entrusted to the actual living people of Ireland. It is probable that no “war of liberation” has ever been fought with so little support from the people who are supposed to be being liberated, and in the face of so much outright rejection and condemnation by that same people. In the Republic of Ireland, all the democratic parties, an overwhelming majority of the Parliament speaking for an overwhelming majority of the people, not merely

reject and condemn the IRA but have enacted, and recently strengthened, severe repressive measures against it. In Northern Ireland the Protestant majority are of course bitterly hostile to the IRA, and some of them indiscriminately vengeful against anyone thought of as sympathizing with it. The Northern Catholics are traditionally cast as sympathizers, both by many Northern Protestants and by the propaganda of the IRA itself. This again is a highly misleading picture. It is quite true that the long-standing sense of grievance of the minority in Northern Ireland, the frustrations of second-class citizenship and persistent high unemployment, provided the IRA with favorable opportunities. It is also true that some Catholic areas in 1969-70 initially welcomed IRA individuals and units in the mistaken belief that their role would be the purely defensive one of protecting the ghettos against such attacks by Protestant mobs as occurred in August 1969 and later.

However, one of the paradoxes of that period was that the same (Catholic) people welcomed *both* the British Army *and* the new-



*The heroes of the 1916 Easter Rising*



y founded Provisional IRA, as, in effect two lines of defense against danger from the Protestant side. The IRA, for its part, saw the British Army as an enemy more "real" (in traditional terms) than Protestant extremists traditionally, "misguided fellow-Irishmen"), and saw the ghettos not as places to be defended from outside violence, but as springboards for the eventual liberation of a territory. While all the people of Northern Ireland—and people in the Republic and in Britain, too—have suffered as a result of the IRA's terror campaign, the people who probably have suffered most are the people whom the IRA has been claiming to "protect": the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. They have suffered from sectarian reprisals organized by Protestant extremists (and answered on equivalent sectarian lines by the IRA); they have suffered from the actions of British troops in quest of the IRA and its arms in Catholic areas; and they have suffered at the hands of the IRA itself, whenever they have ventured to call for a halt to its violence, or otherwise thwarted its will.

Catholic rejection of the IRA campaign has been strongly expressed *both* by the elected representatives of that population (the SDLP), by the Catholic bishops (who rejected the idea of attempting "to bomb a million Protestants into a United Ireland"), and most recently through the impressive mass marches of the Women for Peace movement which has presented the spectacle, unprecedented in Northern Ireland, of large numbers of women crossing the ghetto lines, uniting, Catholics and Protestants together, to call for an end to all the violence, from whatever side it issues. In the Catholic areas, the IRA has responded with officially disavowed intimidation (as have Protestant extremists elsewhere), but these brave women have stood their ground, and have been supported by parallel large-scale demonstrations in the Republic.

It is clear, then, that the IRA is explicitly repudiated, not merely by a large majority of the people of the island of Ireland, but by a large majority in all three of the main sections into which that population has been divided by history and tradition and their political consequences.

Nonetheless, the IRA not merely continues to exist but has been able to conduct, over more than half a decade, one of the most vicious and sustained terrorist campaigns in history. I shall consider later some of the consequences of that campaign, and the consequences which would flow from what its organizers would consider its successful further progress. I doubt whether even they consider

"victory"—essentially, though not nominally, a united Ireland controlled by its "liberators"—as a possibility for this generation.

**F**OR THIS GENERATION . . . "These words come very easily to the lips of traditional Irish Republicans, and the branch of the IRA now actually engaged in terrorism—the Provisional IRA—is highly traditional. The meaning of the words in an Irish Republican context is not immediately intelligible to outsiders. Yet that meaning is essential to an understanding of the IRA as an enduring phenomenon, and of the full sinister significance of helping that phenomenon to endure. It is therefore necessary to say something here both of Irish history, as Irish Republicans conceive of it, and of actual Irish history, of which the Republican myth is part, but which contains other vitally important elements which the myth ignores or distorts. I know from experience that Americans are apt to be impatient with harping on the past, whether that past is real or imaginary. Very reasonably, you want to hear about the here and now, and how it is all likely to turn out. Unfortunately, in Ireland conceptions of the past are very much part of the here and now, and powerfully affect the range of future possibilities.

As a revolutionary organization, the modern IRA can trace its origins convincingly enough, back to the 1860s, to the Irish Republican Brotherhood, remembered generally as the Fenian movement, from the name of its American wing. The significance of the word *Republican* was that—Britain being a monarchy—it implied total separation of Ireland from Britain, with no possible compromise, whereas the constitutional nationalists, like Daniel O'Connell earlier and Charles Parnell later, were prepared to accept less than total separation. The term, derived from the French Revolutionary period and the writings of the Irish pro-Jacobin Theobald Wolfe Tone, was intended to mark a complete break with constitutional nationalists' objectives, matching a break with their methods, since the Fenians were committed to the use of physical force, which the constitutional nationalists rejected.

Most Irish Catholics in the nineteenth century followed constitutional nationalists politically and gave almost no support to the military activities of the Fenians, but at the same time they cherished, in varying degrees, vaguely pro-Fenian sentiments. A good Fenian funeral could attract a following enormously greater than anything the living Fenian could have commanded. A Fenian *past*, including

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if possible a prison sentence, was often a passport to a successful future as a constitutional nationalist. Fenian ballads were extremely popular with people who, in practical political activities, supported constitutional nationalism. Constitutional leaders themselves liked to use Fenian-like rhetoric, especially about the past. Among people who formally condemned Fenian violence, it was reckoned a source of pride to have Fenian friends or relations, while any social or family tie with an "informer"—even if in constitutional theory a law-abiding citizen—was an undying disgrace.

Names and circumstances have vastly changed, but this inherited ambivalence—understandable enough in the earlier period—still affects contemporary attitudes toward the IRA and the law. To a remarkable degree, the contemporary IRA has appeared to be unimpressed by the enormous volume of public repudiation and condemnation directed against it in Ireland. Disapproval is ineffective if ambivalence is sensed as underlying it, and there has been considerable ambivalence in the language of many public men—a tendency to condemn violence but to go on to say something that helps to justify it. That ambivalence has greatly waned but has not altogether disappeared. Until it does, the IRA's lifeline to public opinion will not be severed.

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A procession of martyrs

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**W**HILE SOME nineteenth-century attitudes subsist, new puzzles have been added to the old ones. One of the strangest is that the modern Irish state, the Republic of Ireland, which condemns the IRA and is condemned by it, has been deemed to owe its origin to the actions of members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood from which, on grounds not easy to refute, the modern IRA

claims descent. This situation creates intellectual and moral difficulties which some contemporary Irishmen find it painful either to explore or to see explored by others.

It is certainly true that the Easter Rising of 1916 was planned, timed, and directed by members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. They acted, of course, without any democratic mandate, in the name of an ideal concept of Ireland, transcending the actual views or wishes of the actual people of Ireland at any given time. The Fenians, the men of 1916, and the contemporary IRA have all in turn regarded themselves as the custodians of this ideal, and as licensed by it to take any lives which they have decided are standing in the way of its fulfillment. But although the Easter Rising was in a tradition, it gave a new twist to that tradition. This was due to the strange personality, original genius, and concentrated will of the most influential of the leaders of the rising, Patrick Pearse.

The Republican movement, during the nineteenth century, had been generally known as "the physical force movement." It had thought, often wildly enough, in terms of imminent success, and it had repeatedly failed. For most Irish people—and for Irish schoolchildren to this day—there is something depressing about the contemplation of all these failures. Pearse, on the other hand, felt exaltation at the thought, not exactly of failure, but of the continual renewal of blood sacrifice for Ireland. Pearse was, of course, by no means unique in the exaltation of his romantic nationalism. This was a prevalent mood throughout Europe before and during the first world war. In Ireland it was quite a natural response to contemporary English jingoism. What was special about Pearse was the intensity of his commitment to a sacrificial form of nationalism, his vision of the past as a long chain of sacrifices, and his imaginative understanding of the power over the future which further sacrifices could exert. He was deter-



*Bloody Sunday, Londonderry, 1972*



mined himself to be part of such a blood sacrifice, inspiring other blood sacrifices, as the Fenians had done. No man better understood the power of funerals; it was at the funeral of the Fenian dynamiter O'Donovan Rossa that Pearse spoke the words most often quoted by the contemporary IRA: "And while Ireland holds these [Fenian] graves Ireland unfree shall never be at peace." The concepts of the divine and of recurrent Irish blood sacrifices were fused. The Proclamation of the Republic in Easter 1916 begins with the words: "In the name of God and of the dead generations..." W. B. Yeats, himself an occasional, fickle, but all too memorable propagator of the sacrificial cult, summarized the lesson:

*For Patrick Pearse had said  
That in every generation  
Must Ireland's blood be shed.*

Now, the leaders of the contemporary IRA are not like Patrick Pearse in temperament, character, or methods. They are not mystics or poets or chivalrous dreamers, nor are they drawn to self-immolation. Pearse would have viewed with horror their version of the reenactment of the sacrifice: their bombings of restaurants and pubs; their murders of civilians in their houses; their knee-cappings and arrings and featherings; their sectarian reprisals; their intimidation and extortion. The Proclamation of 1916 specifically condemned "inhumanity" and "rapine" as well as "cowardice." Nonetheless Pearse's interpretation of history is important in two ways, to these his unforeseen and gruesome disciples. First of all, just as they are insulated against democratic repudiation by the whole elitist Fenian tradition, so they are insulated against failure by Pearse's interpretation of history. Thus they are not perturbed if it can be shown both that their bloody actions are repudiated by almost the entire community, and that they are doomed to failure. Within the tradition to

which they belong, their personal importance is that they are renewing the blood sacrifice "in this generation." If that sacrifice does not result in freedom now, then that will be the fault not of the tiny fighting minority, but of the majority which is—as in the past—unworthy of them.

The Irish Republican movement, or condition, is thus distinguished from other revolutionary movements in being *failure-proof*. Its greatest blunders are successes if they produce more martyrs, the guarantors of ultimate victory, in however remote an epoch.

**N**ORMAL LEARNING is by trial and error, and error is eliminated by examining the causes of failure. The Irish Republican condition, being incapable of failure, is also incapable of learning. Derived from a culture which has for long placed little value on rationality—a word which Irish printers almost automatically misprint as the more familiar term *nationality*—Irish Republicanism prides itself on reiteration, in thought, word, and deed. It is an infinitely dreary system, of desolating durability.

The "Republicanism" I am discussing here is both the traditional and the dominant form of militant Irish Republicanism, the ideological driving force of the Provisional IRA. I am not concerned with the "progressive" and "Marxist" versions of Republicanism, extant in the so-called Official IRA, which for a while competed with the Provisional IRA in terrorism and then gave up the struggle. There would be plenty to be said about them also, but it seems more urgent to talk about the form of Republicanism for which men are now killing people, and collecting money for that purpose in America. The Officials were never good at reaching Irish-American money; their Marxist language stood between them and potential subscribers. The more tradi-

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tional Provisionals have been much more successful here. However, their "policy documents" do not adequately reflect their archaic ideology. Such documents are compiled by intellectuals, more or less, and use language intended to sound modern and thoughtful, about federal structures, community government, a nine-county Ulster, and the Lord knows what. People who read this stuff about theoretical democratic forms may not be aware that it is produced on behalf of an authoritarian military organization which in practice rejects and despises all democratic process. But anyone who has seen a Provisional rally, and listened to what gets the cheers, knows that "community government" and similar gimmicks are not what this is all about. It is about blood.

The system I have described is inherently proof against reasoned argument, but its proponents can themselves effectively refute arguments which claim to derive from, or be consistent with, the nonrational assumptions from which the IRA itself derives its mystique and continuity. This is the second way in which an image of the 1916 rising continues to be of service to the contemporary IRA.

The *tactics* of the contemporary IRA can certainly not be justified by Pearse's *example*. But the *concept* of the IRA—the renewal of the bloody conflict until the connection with England is altogether broken for all Ireland—appears fully in line with Pearse's *doctrine*. And Pearse's doctrine was long accorded, and to a lesser extent still is accorded, a quasi-sacred status in nationalist Ireland. The state, of which Pearse is rather paradoxically regarded as a founder, has been quite successful, pragmatically, in containing the IRA. But it has been less successful ideologically, insofar as its nominal ideology has derived from the same sources as have sustained, and do sustain, the organization which it seeks to suppress. At the level of the crossroads pub—and at higher levels, too—few people have been able to refute the arguments of the local Republican, because these arguments are generally based on or closely related to assumptions which have been, and to some extent still are, widely prevalent in the culture. This has especially been so when the local Republican talks about liberating the six occupied counties of Northern Ireland. The Irish nationalist tradition generally—and not just in its Republican or extreme forms—has always tended to over-emphasize Britain's responsibility for partition and to ignore, or gloss over as irrelevant, the fact that a majority of the people in Northern Ireland do not want a united Ireland. It is only fairly recently that

the implications of this reality have begun to sink in, as far as the population of the Republic is concerned.

Another long-established convention of political rhetoric and official history holds that the Irish State derives its existence from the Easter Rising, and implies that, without that rising, the British would still be in occupation of all Ireland. Formally, the IRA does not accept this conventional doctrine—since, in its view, the existence of a twenty-six-county state is a betrayal of the Easter Rising. Informally, however, the IRA has derived great benefit from the implications of the doctrine. After all, if the gun got us the degree of freedom we have, why not let the gun finish the job? The argument can have a powerful appeal, especially to minds sufficiently unsophisticated, or uninformed, to have accepted it at face value in the first place. Most potential recruits to the IRA possess such minds.

The relation of the Easter Rising to the present Irish State is of course much more complex and ambiguous than the conventional doctrine seeks to assert. Up to a point, the Easter Rising was a spectacular triumph of failure, exactly in the line of Pearse's thought. The British wartime government, as if working to Pearse's script, saw to the consummation of the blood sacrifice, through sixteen executions, in circumstances which seemed designed to produce, and did, the maximum revulsion against the British, as well as an emotional swing in favor of the dead men and their surviving comrades, and against the hitherto dominant constitutional nationalists. This revulsion—combining with other factors of less relevance to our subject—led to the overwhelming victory of Sinn Féin (the heirs of 1916) throughout nationalist (Catholic) Ireland in the general election of 1918. (The Protestants of Ulster continued to vote Unionist as before.) In Irish Republican retrospect this electoral result constituted not only an endorsement of the rising, but also an irrevocable mandate to renew an armed struggle for freedom. In fact, the people had not been asked for such a mandate. Sinn Féin, in its electoral campaign, had taken great care to avoid any suggestion that support for it meant support for an armed struggle. The people were encouraged to think that Sinn Féin, refusing to sit in the British Parliament, would state the case for an all-Ireland sovereign state to the Peace Conference, and that the case would be irresistible, given the Wilsonian commitment to self-determination and the freedom of small nationalities.

These hopes were, of course, doomed to be disappointed. What followed in reality was



guerrilla war, and the counter-guerrilla terror of the Black and Tans. Finally, in 1921, the British offered a settlement. This settlement contained significant improvements over the version of home rule which had been offered to the constitutional nationalists before the war and before the guerrilla, but it did not differ in kind from that earlier offer. The main political case of the heirs of 1916 against the constitutional nationalists was that the latter had—most reluctantly—agreed to the partition of the island. But the same heirs—some sooner and some later—eventually had to accept basically the same thing.

The present Irish State was established not in 1916 nor in absolute terms, but in 1921 on the basis of a compromise. The limited self-government (for twenty-six counties) obtained in 1921 was to develop into sovereign independence for the same area. I see absolutely no reason to suppose that the more limited self-government offered to the constitutional nationalists could not equally well have developed into sovereign independence for the same area, without the need for any violent uprising.

I am not here arguing a “violence achieves nothing” case. In this situation among the things it ensured was further violence, in an indefinite perspective and in accordance with Pearse’s uncanny vision. The new violence began immediately, with the Irish Civil War of 1922-23, between those who accepted the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 and those who rejected it. It flared up again briefly at intervals, over the decades thereafter, but the present politico-sectarian strife in Northern Ireland has already cost more lives than what we still call “the Civil War,” and has lasted longer than any previous “war” in Ireland since the seventeenth century.

### British influence

**I**RELAND UNFREE shall never be at peace . . .”

So when will Ireland be free, and at peace?

The Republican answer is: “When Britain stops interfering in Ireland.” Today, the main emphasis is on the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. I shall examine in a moment the question of whether such a withdrawal would leave Ireland at peace or not. But would withdrawal even leave Ireland free in Republican terms? I think it would not. On the most optimistic—and in my view least realistic—assessment of what would happen then, there would have to be an agreement



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involving the elected representatives of Ulster Protestants, Ulster Catholics, and the Dublin government on forms of institutions for Northern Ireland. This is not at all what the IRA want. To them *all* these groups of Irish people—although between them they represent all the people of the island—are already guilty, in varying degrees and ways, of collaboration with Britain. Any agreement between them would therefore be automatically denounced as having been rigged by Britain. In such conditions Britain would not have *really* withdrawn from Ireland: she would be continuing her interference through her stooges, dupes, and so on. Ireland would still be unfree, and could not therefore be left at peace. In the Republican tradition the judges of whether Ireland is free or not are of course not the people of Ireland, nor their elected representatives of all shades, but the pure minority of committed Republicans, “the faithful few.” Even if some Republicans were to accept such a settlement, those who refused—whether in a minority or not—would be the pure, licensed to continue the struggle. If the sole arbiter of what constitutes freedom is the IRA, then freedom can only be interpreted as absolute victory for the IRA—not merely over Britain, but also over all sections of the Irish people. As long as this kind of Republican tradition exists at all, Ireland will continue to be “un-free,” and the custodians of the tradition will thereby have a permanent license to kill.

The ideological reasons for the persistence of the IRA are strong, but they are not the only reasons. The conventional British Tory picture of the IRA as “thugs and gangsters” leaves out an important reality: the fanatical and apparently impenetrable conviction which Republicans have about the justice of their

case, the legitimacy of their own actions, and their moral superiority over those who condemn them. Their ideological armor, strange and archaic though it may appear to others, is of immense importance to their morale and their durability. “Thugs and gangsters” won’t do, though there are plenty of those around, but “dedicated idealists” doesn’t cover it all either. There are risks and hardships attaching to IRA membership, but there are also benefits. Members of the IRA, from the ordinary “volunteer” up to the leaders enjoy a certain prestige as long as their organization is actually killing people, and their movement also depends on that for funds. Violence can become addictive, and so can the power over others which it confers. The campaign has now lasted long enough to develop vested interests of its own, reinforcing the inbuilt ideological commitment to persistence even in conditions which are utterly hopeless.

I have considered the prospects, even if British withdrawal under IRA pressure could conceivably be followed by political agreement between the representatives of two communities in Northern Ireland, and with Dublin. An agreement between these parties might be possible—and I hope some day will be possible—if *the IRA were to disappear from the scene*. But if the IRA were still active, and if British withdrawal appeared in the light of a surrender to it, then no such agreement would be possible, and what would be likely to follow would be sectarian civil war on a Lebanese scale. A certain Ulster loyalist tradition is quite as bloody-minded and fanatical as that of the IRA, and its adherents are vastly more numerous, especially in the most densely populated parts of Northern Ireland. I have no doubt that if the British were to withdraw





in such circumstances these loyalists—with massive Protestant support—would move to “deal with the IRA once and for all” and in doing so would show little mercy to the population which they regard as having given aid and comfort to the IRA: the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. I have no wish here to speculate about the dimensions or exact nature of this catastrophe, or about its political consequences in the Republic of Ireland, in Britain and elsewhere. But one thing is certain: it would *not* lead to a united Ireland. Its consequences could include a new border in a new place; they would certainly include—after many dead, many injured, many refugees—a deeper and more bitter division between the two communities in Ireland.

**T**HE READER MAY BE INCLINED to dismiss this picture as just a personal nightmare. There are some people, by no means all of them Republican apologists, who dismiss such fears as exaggerated, or capable of being exorcised by reassuring language about “*phased withdrawal*,” as though the rate of the process would transform the nature of its consequences. An announcement of intent to carry out a phased withdrawal of the troops would in fact be likely to precipitate a feverish buildup of “defensive capability” in both communities, leading toward civil war quite as surely as plain withdrawal would do. The consequences of withdrawal are widely recognized, even among people whom one might assume to be committed to this “solution.” I know a British MP who was once attracted to the “troops out” movement. Meeting him in 1973, I noticed that he had changed his opinion and I asked why. He said it had come about as a result of more visits to Northern Ireland, and of one experience in particular. This was a meeting with a deputation of Long Kesh dependents—wives and mothers of then interned Republicans. Toward the end of the meeting, the MP put the simple question: “What do you think would happen if we pulled the troops out?” The answer was memorable: “We’d all be murdered.” He had the impression that the feeling was general.

This was the feeling of women whose menfolk *wanted* the British troops out and, at least in some cases, had been trying to drive them out by force. It also followed the very worst period in relations between the troops in question and the Catholic population: the period (1971-72) of the use of interrogation techniques subsequently condemned by the European Commission on Human Rights, and

of the “Bloody Sunday” shooting of thirteen unarmed men in Derry. In reaction to IRA violence, directed at them out of Catholic areas, British troops had tended to treat Catholics generally as hostile, and the British government of the time had not discouraged the tendency, as subsequent British governments (both Tory and Labor) have done. In these circumstances the MP knew that women like these hated the British troops. What shook him was the genuine dread, even in this quarter, of what would happen if their own menfolk “won” and the hated troops actually went.

The answer, though it was blurted out by a “Republican dependent,” was not a proper Republican answer. In terms of IRA strategy, the kind of catastrophe I have very lightly sketched is an acceptable price for the success which the withdrawal of the troops would represent. “Civilian casualties,” as one of their leaders has said, “are inevitable in urban guerrilla warfare.” Even the fact—insofar as the more intelligent among them recognize it—that the consequences of withdrawal would leave Ireland still partitioned, is not a deterrent. “What if unity is not achieved in this generation? There will be plenty of other generations.” What is important is that “this generation” will have struck its blow, and sacrificed its blood; and the consequences of withdrawal would certainly include the greatest blood sacrifice that Ireland has seen since the bloody insurrections of 1798 and their still bloodier suppression. It is true that, after this slaughter, Northern Ireland, whatever the extent of its territory, would have no place for the IRA; the Catholic ghettos would be gone, in one way or another. As against that, conditions *in the Republic* would be much

**“The IRA campaign is at present a main factor in keeping the British troops in Northern Ireland, as well as in poisoning the relationship of the two communities there.”**



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more propitious than ever before from an IRA point of view. The influx of refugees, the legacy of indignation and bitterness, the inflammation of nationalist passion, would all nourish Republicanism and prepare the way for the "final struggle." By this time, the Northern Protestants would no longer be "misguided fellow Irishmen"—indeed, that term is already somewhat out of fashion—but "Britain's garrison in Ireland," to be crushed or driven out. In the meantime the liquidation of "traitors" in the Republic itself could proceed.

These prospects are not openly contemplated by the IRA at present. Its propaganda likes to paint a rosy picture of peace by agreement (implicitly between the IRA and its Protestant enemies) after a planned and phased British withdrawal. But the actions of the IRA do not point toward any such result, and its directing brains must know the probable consequence of any "success" these actions could conceivably win. The basic case against the IRA is not that its methods are horrible, though they are that. The basic case is that the only kind of "success" that these methods can win is even far more horrible in human terms than the present methods themselves; and that a movement which can use such methods toward such successes, is anti-human.

I don't believe the IRA is likely to "succeed" in this way, although that dark possibility does remain. Yet I also find it hard to believe that the IRA will speedily fade away. To what extent the great public repudiation of it, especially by the Northern Catholic women, will affect its operations remains to be seen. There are signs that it is aware that it has a serious problem here, and that it is not sure how to cope with it. A similar, more limited peace protest by women, led the other IRA—the left-leaning Officials—to call off their terror campaign in 1972. The Provisional IRA is, however, more fanatical and traditional, more abstract in its attitudes, and is not, like the Officials, theoretically committed to winning mass support. ("What mass support did the men of 1916 have?")

I believe that in the long run the durability of the IRA depends on the durability of the special political culture that has nurtured it. To the extent that public men continue to pay lip service to assumptions for which IRA men risk their lives, then the IRA has an advantage and a recruiting ground. There is, as I have indicated, a growing impatience with that kind of lip service, a growing sense of what it can cost. One hears less about unity being "the first national aim," even from lips accustomed to shaping such syllables. There

is—there has had to be—more thinking about people, and less about nationalist abstractions. In the Republic, the traditional emotional weapons of the IRA—such as the exploitation of hunger strikes, funerals, et cetera—have in recent years notably failed in their traditional effect. These conditions have not stopped the IRA, but they may inhibit its development.

Straightforward disgust with the IRA and all its works has greatly increased, and the traditional ambivalence has correspondingly decreased. Considerable traces of it are however still discernible, more I suspect among "opinion-formers" in the media and elsewhere than among the general public. Anyone who attacks this ambivalence is liable to be accused of being unpatriotic. The accusation is founded on the assumption that patriotism implies loyalty to traditional attitudes, without regard to the inadequacies of these or their contemporary cost to human beings.

As far as Northern Ireland is concerned, the "British troops out" people have an apparently attractive solution while those of us who oppose them may appear to be advocating that these troops remain there forever. Neither the Irish nor the British want that. There is now quite general agreement that the people of Northern Ireland should be encouraged to work out their own affairs by accommodation between the two communities. Unfortunately, a stable basis for such an accommodation has not yet been found, despite repeated efforts and the brief apparent success of the Sunningdale agreement, shattered in 1974 by the joint effects of a continued IRA offensive and loyalist industrial action, combined with intimidation. The unexpected successes of the peace women may conceivably bring into being a basis for future, more stable, accommodation, through the exercise of effective community pressure on the killers in both communities. If that pressure succeeds, the killings stop, and stable accommodation then takes place, Northern Ireland can police itself under agreed institutions, and the troops can safely go. But failing that, the troops cannot safely be withdrawn.

The IRA campaign is at present a main factor in keeping the British troops in Northern Ireland, as well as in poisoning the relationship of the two communities there—not uniting Ireland but dividing it even more deeply. Those, in America and elsewhere, who are contributing to this campaign are contributing to those effects, to the protraction and possible escalation of human suffering and to no conceivable other result of benefit to anyone except the fanatics who collect the money and do the killing. □



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# THE BUSINESS OF BUYING FRIENDS

An inquiry into the affairs of the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation and the advanced technologies of transnational greed.

by Jim Hougan

*That was in another Country:*

*And, besides, the Wench is dead.*

—Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*

# WHEN

DANIEL J. HAUGHTON came before the Senate's microphones in September of last year, humiliation and loss impended. Summoned there as the Lockheed Corporation's chairman of the board, Haughton knew that his testimony was likely to prove catastrophic—not only to his reputation, but to the firm as well.

To most of the members and staff of the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, it was apparent that Haughton's organization had been up to no good. If preliminary reports and investigations could be believed, Lockheed had invaded the treasuries of a dozen nations, helped to corrupt the political processes of both hemispheres, deceived the taxpayer, destabilized the governments of three allies, undermined NATO, subverted the marketplace, boosted inflation, and prompted a series of newspaper sensations that appeared to have resulted in suicides as far apart as Tokyo and L.A.

In hearing rooms accustomed to pleas of the Fifth Amendment by witnesses with paper bags

*Jim Hougan, a contributing editor of Harper's and the author of Decadence, is writing a book about the intelligence services in the employ of multinational corporations.*

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over their heads, Haughton made a disquieting appearance. Because he and his organization had not, apparently, broken any American laws in the United States, Haughton and his attorneys insisted that he'd done nothing *wrong*. Sen. Joseph Biden (among others) took issue with this, commenting, "Your concept of morality is very intriguing.... The chairman [Sen. Frank Church] has said we have got to search for a way out of this. I am not sure I want to look with you for a way out, to be perfectly blunt about it.... In my mind, you may have corrupted the system completely."

**S**ENATOR BIDEN WAS NOT alone in his despair of arriving at a clear view or a way out. Just as he threw up his hands in frustration, so did the press. For more than a year the subcommittee had been engaged in a series of investigations into the corrupt practices of American corporations operating abroad. With lunar regularity, silver-haired barons of commerce arrived in Washington under subpoena, shot their cuffs, swore to God, and reluctantly confirmed the pattern of bribery and intrigue revealed by the subcommittee's staff. Day-long affairs, the hearings were predictably sensational. In the matter of the Lockheed Corporation alone, the missing principals included: the prince of the Netherlands, a French socialite known as "Paris popette," a chorus of dead Luftwaffe pilots, a former "Spanish priest on the Hong Kong-Tokyo currency run, various heroes of the European Resistance, the Japanese general who conceived the attack on Pearl Harbor, a survivor of Nazi medical experiments, former Manchurian spies, and a pro-Fascist samurai with bags of industrial diamonds and ties to both the Ginza mob and the Rev. Sun Myung Moon—not to mention an assortment of Ivy League bagmen, Swiss gnomes, Arab sheikhs, and Third World generals linked invisibly to one another by a sirocco of numbered accounts, conduits, and dummy corporations.

It was too much to handle in two days of hearings, and reporters' jobs were made harder, rather than easier, by the release, *en bloc*, of several hundred pages of relevant documents. Included among them were checks, contracts, audit reports, memos, letters, Telexes, receipts, and scrawled notes—many of them censored and all of them couched in double-talk of one kind or another. The lawyer's recondite phrase. The spy's allusion. The bagman's euphemism. And just plain code. The material was impossible to interpret on a short deadline, and its publication in full was absurd to contemplate.

In the absence of indictments, the shortage of time, the interest of space, and the prevailing confusion, the story tended to be reduced to a single headline: **WOGS TAKE BRIBES**. Which was hardly news. However awkward it might seem that American firms should have had to indulge in the greasy activities described, the consensus appeared to be that perfidy and corruption are genetically entrenched abroad, and thus the price of doing business there. American corporations are not alone in paying bribes: the French arms industry and Japanese shipbuilding concerns are frequently cited as being among the

most ruthless practitioners of "black salesmanship." Lockheed's bribes (and Northrop's and Exxon's, and those of some 200 other American firms) were reimbursable, added on to the cost of every commodity sold. And so the money did not come out of "our" pockets, but "theirs." Indeed, by including bribes and kickbacks in the cost of manufacture and overhead, the net profit—figured by adding a fixed percentage of the product's total cost to the final sales price—was actually *larger* than it would have been if no improper payments had been made. The joke, you see, was on "them."

Americans were not, therefore, particularly sympathetic to what they regarded as the pieties of the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations. Common sense, reinforced by a measure of postwar xenophobia, suggested that kickbacks were commonplace and even essential to doing business abroad. Once again, it seemed, Washington politicians and the press were embarrassing respected Americans to no worthwhile end, expecting Uncle Sam to compete with one hand tied behind his back.

Enormous pressure was brought to bear. Employees and stockholders of the firms under investigation wrote furious letters to Congress complaining that the "Church circus" threatened their jobs, their unearned income, and the American economy itself. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger implied that the subcommittee threatened national security by its revelations, embarrassing America's best friends, and creating unprecedented opportunities for Communist gains in national elections the world over. And there was pressure from abroad, too. Foreign industrialists, politicians, military leaders—whole governments—pushed every lever at their disposal to block the wash of bad news. From Japan, an organization of kamikaze enthusiasts, calling itself "Chrysanthemum in Water," swore to assassinate the entire subcommittee and its staff for the offense it had given to their homeland.

All of this made it difficult to discuss certain aspects of the affair. For instance, the subcommittee's search into the slush funds and conduits of Lockheed et al. was part of a continuing investigation into the general nature and impact of multinational corporations. Earlier efforts in this area had provided insights into the machinations of ITT and the International Petroleum Cartel, their relationships to the intelligence community, corrupt practices, financial power, and roles in sundry coups d'état. The issues raised by these investigations—matters that went to the heart of political and economic control in the twentieth century—were far larger than any single contract or sale of arms. And yet the subcommittee was forced to deal in specifics: bearer checks, bank transfers, and telegrams from Beirut.

**T**HE HEARINGS OF WHICH Lockheed and Northrop became the subjects began with a suggestion from the Watergate Special Prosecutor's Office: there seemed to be a lot of unexplained money floating around in the Alps, Bahamas, and Makasar Strait—why didn't the sub-



committee look into it? The most recent scandals, then, were a financial extension of the political debacle of Watergate: not only had corporate slush funds, laundered abroad, been used to fund Nixon's Presidency, but the relationship between the White House and the multinationals was central to the whole affair. The two existed in near-perfect symbiosis, forming an ecosystem of high-altitude corruption.

And there were other issues, too. For one thing, corporations found to be making "improper payments" were not (as they tried to suggest) competing exclusively against corrupt foreign firms, but against honest American ones as well. Diverting contracts from American competitors with superior products, they deprived stockholders of other firms and, in some instances, weakened the military capability of American allies. Moreover, in making *value* a tertiary criterion of the marketplace, they compelled their competitors to emulate their illicit practices abroad. Northrop's corruption, for example, was a direct, *defensive* response to Lockheed's. Thus, as if by a variation of Gresham's law, bad business drove out the good.

There was also the issue of national security. Needing to pay off only the most respected and influential—NATO generals, defense ministers, and heads of state—the multinationals achieved with ease what hostile intelligence services had been endeavoring to accomplish for decades. Bribing and kicking back, the industrial giants rendered their beneficiaries susceptible to every sort of blackmail.

In addition there was the question of "self-service" kickbacks. With their conduits and dummy corporations receding into the jurisdictional fogs of Liechtenstein and Panama, it was impossible to tell where the American money actually went. The impression conveyed to the public is that it went abroad. To foreigners. In fact, some of it may have stuck to American palms, and subcommittee lawyers privately suspect—but have not proven—that a portion of the kickbacks paid to foreigners were, in turn, punted toward the numbered accounts of American executives.

There are even more basic issues. Jack Blum, formerly of the subcommittee's staff, remembers a conversation with Swiss air attachés. Looking out at the peaceful expanse of the Swiss cantons, a countryside redolent with neutrality, he set the generals back with a basic question. "Why does Switzerland need fighter jets?" he asked. It took a few minutes and a few phone calls for the answer to come back, and even then it was in the form of another question. It was: "To protect the valleys?" Switzerland, of course, can afford its lethal toys, but other countries cannot. The point was made by Senator Church while questioning Lockheed's international sales chief, William Cowden. Noting that Lockheed paid kickbacks even in the absence of competition he asked why. "Because," Cowden said, "we are frequently competing, not necessarily with another airplane just like ours, but we are competing for the sales dollars that would be spent on something else."

"Such as Kellogg's Corn Flakes," Church replied. "I mean, what you are really saying there is if we don't get their dollars, they might spend them for something un-

related to aircraft. . . . If you don't pay commissions they might buy food."

Whether the product is heroin or fighter jets, the result is often the same: profits that corrupt and, not occasionally, impoverish. Similarly, there has been osmosis between the CIA and the multinationals, with each making use of the facilities, methods, and personnel of the other. In this connection, it's been pointed out that "aggressive, expansionist societies have the best organized intelligence systems."\* True of countries, it is also true of corporations.

## THE OLD GANG DE CAUSIBUS

**T**HE LOCKHEED CORPORATION is the largest defense contractor of the most heavily armed superpower in the history of the world. With about 60,000 employees, an equal number of stockholders, and contracts in the billions, it produces passenger jets, cargo jets, fighter jets, patrol planes, helicopters, missiles, armored cars, submarines, satellite systems, computer wares, rocket motors, ground sensor devices, bulk tankers, and a whole lot more—most of it classified and all of it expensive.

The firm's sales to foreign countries are a relatively small, but not insignificant, part of the country's overall balance of trade—and a key to whatever financial success Lockheed can have. In the past, that success has been considerable. It was Lockheed, for instance, that put the Luftwaffe back in the air following World War II, flogging 900 Starfighter jets to the fledgling West German Air Force. That sale proved strategic to the company's subsequent growth because it led, rather directly, to the sale of still more Starfighters to the other NATO countries and Japan. Accomplishing this rearmament at a time when European industry was still rebuilding from the war meant that Lockheed's only competition came from other American companies. This, however, did not stop the firm from engaging in certain "business unorthodoxies." According to Ernest Hauser, an international arms merchant whose Lockheed journals have caused him to be dubbed "the diary man," the firm awarded \$12 million to West Germany's ultraconservative Christian Social Union. The money, Hauser claims, was paid to the party's right-wing leader, Franz-Josef Strauss, to influence the 1961 Starfighter transactions. Former West

\* Harry H. Ransom, *The Intelligence Establishment* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), p. 49.



German Defense Minister Strauss denies the allegation: Defense Ministry files pertaining to the Starfighter deal have mysteriously "disappeared." Strauss, however, has an allegation of his own: according to him, West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt offered Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands \$40 million in the early 1970s if the prince would urge the Dutch to purchase F-14 Cobras from the Northrop Corporation. (Schmidt denies the accusation.) A former Lockheed representative in Europe, Hauser also alleges princely greed, insisting that under-the-table Lockheed payments in excess of \$1 million were paid to Bernhard in the early Sixties.

Heir to the principality of Germany's Lippe-Biesterfeld, Bernhard was an early member of the Hitler Youth Movement and an employee of the I. G. Farben combine. The prince, however, became a hero of the Dutch Resistance shortly after his wedding to Juliana (heiress to the House of Orange, future queen, and perhaps the world's richest woman). Taking an active role in Europe's reconstruction, he joined the boards of more than 300 corporations. Despite the evidence of his wealth, it's widely believed that Bernhard accepted the million-dollar Lockheed bribe and used the money to support his illegitimate daughter and her mother, "Paris popette," in France.

Hauser's accusations against the prince, while convincing in many details, have yet to be proven. Lockheed officials admit that some of the money was paid, but their European capo, an American expatriate named Fred Meuser, claims to have pocketed the bribe himself (thereby echoing an alibi put forward by another agent in behalf of an Arab prince). An investigative council of "three wise men," appointed by the Dutch, has issued an ambiguous report on the matter, simultaneously chastising and acquitting Bernhard in the name of reasonable doubt.

The Starfighter affair is an especially sensitive one. A financial bonanza, the plane was less successful in a military sense. An "unforgiving" bird at best, the jet became positively dangerous when its European purchasers converted it from a "single-mission" fighter to a "multiple-mission" aircraft. Loading it down with a vast array of special equipment, the plane was brought to the very edge of its capabilities. Getting it there was a notoriously profitable business for Lockheed and its agents, since commissions on the additional equipment and replacement parts were often two and three times as high as those on the original sale. It seemed to many, therefore, that the agents made a financial killing when the plane was rendered into a kind of time bomb.\*

Amid all the denials, one hardly knows whom to believe. Mechanisms for paying the bribes were deliberately established in such a way that the payments could never be uncovered or, failing that, would allow the recipient room for "plausible denial." Moreover, many of the agents were themselves quite devious, in some cases peddling influence they didn't have, pocketing kickbacks intended for others, making pacts with competitors, and "discounting" their own contracts to third parties. "Dou-

\* In its Starfighter sales effort, Lockheed competed against the Grumman Corporation's F-11F fighter. Of 900 Starfighters sold to the Germans, 174 crashed (in peacetime), killing 96 pilots. In Japan, 60 of 230 crashed.

ble agents" were commonplace, especially at Lockheed.

Lockheed's financial success was, in any case, a temporary affair. While it organized a worldwide private intelligence network of considerable competence, the firm suffered ghastly setbacks on its domestic front. The C-5A cargo jet, developed for the Defense Department, incurred enormous cost overruns at precisely the time that the profitable air war in Indochina was coming to an end. A few years earlier, Lockheed might have persuaded federal officials of the need to have the government absorb the overruns; in 1970, however, the Pentagon was on the defensive both at home and abroad. Against its will, the Defense Department was forced to make Lockheed foot the bill for its excesses. In February 1971 the firm consented to absorb \$200 million in overruns, making dire prophecies even as it acquiesced. Two days later, the prophecies began to come true. Rolls Royce, supplier of engines for the C-5A, announced that it would go into receivership. With this catastrophe compounding its own troubles, Lockheed predicted its financial suicide—unless...

Unless Congress agreed to provide a \$250-million loan guarantee.

The proposal outraged principled liberals and conservatives alike, but received powerful support from President Nixon and then Secretary of the Treasury John B. Connally. With overt appeals to Congress, and personal phone calls at the last minute, Nixon and Connally bullied the legislative branch for what many regarded as "corporate welfare." By a 49-48 vote (in which souls were reported lost), the Senate, wracked with filibuster, agreed to insure the loan for a period of two years,\* and Lockheed was restored to grace. Not that the firm had been idle.

In Europe, the Orient, the Mideast, Indonesia, and Latin America, Lockheed's "foreign intrigue channels" were ablaze with activity. Following an unrecorded tête-à-tête between President Nixon and Japanese Prime Minister Takuei Tanaka in Hawaii,\*\* it was agreed that Japan should buy at least \$320 million in civil aircraft from an American firm, the purchase to take place within two years. In less than two months All-Nippon Airways signed a \$400 million contract for twenty-one Lockheed Tristars, thereby fulfilling a major part of the bargain with Japan. Within those same two months, between the summit talks and November 7, 1972 (Election Day), exactly 1 billion yen (\$2.7 million) was delivered in fifteen bags to Yoshio Kodama, Lockheed's secret agent in Japan.

In mid-1975 the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations revealed the pattern of bribery abroad, and subpoenaed Lockheed executives. A few days later, Robert N. Waters, Lockheed's treasurer, was found shot to death, an apparent suicide. While the firm swore to resist demands for its confidential records, the oath was soon declared inoperative by the apparently mistaken arrival of those records in the subcommittee's offices. The effect was immediate and violent. "Undiagnosed" ailments placed prospective witnesses in hospital suites where, incommunicado, they recovered with uncommon slowness.

\* Various extensions were subsequently granted.

\*\* August 31 to September 1, 1972.



In Italy, various agents and executives disappeared across the Swiss border. Meanwhile, leads contained in the Lockheed documents sent subcommittee agents on a Lindblad's tour of world finance: to mansions and castles in the Black Forest, to tropical bars, basements in Tokyo, vaults in Hong Kong, and penthouses in Rome. Occasionally they found what they sought; more often they did not. In Japan an obscure young fanatic obsessed with his country's honor and memories of the "divine wind" became an overnight celebrity when he carried out a kamikaze attack on the mansion of Yoshio Kodama. This attempt at restoring Japanese "face," however, was seriously compromised when local newspapers filled their front pages with stills from the young man's appearances in pornographic films. (Kodama survived and remains too ill to testify.)

**D**ESPITE MONTHS OF investigation by teams of lawyers, auditors, accountants, and the world press, efforts that yielded the testimony of more than 100 witnesses from a dozen nations, and the accumulation of documents that came to be measured by the linear foot—despite all this, the expenditure of a small fortune, and the interventions of all three branches of government, little was resolved. A \$1.3 billion Lockheed contract with Japan was cancelled, \$3 billion in other contracts was jeopardized, and at least one government was demanding some of its money back on an earlier deal. Daniel J. Haughton retired from Lockheed with a \$750,000 pension. Former Prime Minister Takuei Tanaka was charged with corruption and jailed. Legislation that might have regulated or eliminated corporate bribery drowned in parliamentary compromise. As for the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations and its repertory company of investigators, it was recently incorporated into a larger unit of the Senate, restricted by orders that its staff should not investigate specific corporations.

What follows, then, is a narrative of the sort which the subcommittee is now forbidden to embark upon. It is an attempt to illuminate the texture and extent of corporate intrigue as it occurred, and, insofar as possible, to do so in the words of the principals themselves. Relying upon documents delivered into the public domain by the Senate, the narrative intends to explain rather than to expose. While it concentrates upon Lockheed and its agents, moving from country to country and deal to deal, its concern rests not with the corrupting influence of a single corporation but with the *phenomenon* of multinational intrigues. With counterparts deriving from a dozen nations, Lockheed is in no way unique. As the economic instrument of its owners and managers, the firm enjoys a kind of jurisdictional immunity common to all multinationals. That immunity, however, imposes a logic of its own upon the multinationals, a calculus that inclines the firm's executives toward the maximization of profits by any means. Lockheed and its doppelgängers from Europe, Africa, and Japan are representative of a phenomenon that's been gathering force since the second world war: the establishment of a multinational raj whose borders are marked, not by the static

positions of rivers and mountains, but by the flow and transfer of accumulated capital. It is a renaissance of sorts.

## FRAGMENTS OF RUIN

**T**ELEX, 9-6-68, from Lockheed officer to executives in the firm's Georgia headquarters:

"Rush Rush Rush

"Reference: Zephyr Locust

"The Milan meeting September Fourth with Locust, ———, and Snyder addressed itself to delicate and sticky issues; . . . it is quite apparent that Locust's past and current performance in keeping ——— happy remains effective —remembering that ——— is one of the key people we must satisfy with not only what we do, but also with how we do it (and 'who we send to do it'). . . . I feel Caviar can do business the Zephyr way . . . and at the same time make less agonizing the obtaining of future Zephyr business, which is not limited by aye good margin to defense hardware and services. The foregoing thoughts are just that and not intended as aye white (or even dirty cream) paper. End. Jackman/Paris."\*

The use of codes (and distribution designators which serve to "classify" internal documents) have become commonplace at many multinational corporations—as have paper shredders, phone scramblers, burn bags, and a host of eavesdropping and countermeasures equipment with such exotic names as "cloaks" and "slaves." In the above telegram, a substitution code is used wherein "Zephyr" means Saudi Arabia, "Caviar" is the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, and "Locust" refers to a consultant.

Another telegram, whose subject is the addition of 1 percent to an agent's existing commission, suggests that countermeasures equipment may indeed be necessary.

"You are authorized to [offer] it to party concerned, but only thru [consultant]. You may be pressured to make d-i-r-e-c-t arrangement but do not repeat not do so. Have information that

\* I've made some minor changes in the telegram's punctuation so that its text might be intelligible.



[code] has been b-r-o-k-e-n in [Saudi Arabia] so handle this accordingly. \*\*

The "information" apparently came from a Lockheed agent, Adnan Khashoggi. A portly and balding Arab sophisticated, Khashoggi compares himself to J. P. Morgan and presides over an empire that includes more than fifty companies, ranging from banks in California to ships in Indonesia, a meat-packing plant in Brazil, and a Paris fashion house called Jungle Jap. Traveling the world in his own Boeing 727, Khashoggi was paid \$106 million by the Lockheed Corporation between 1970 and 1975; during the same period he represented the Northrop Corporation, billing it more than \$100 million for his services as a go-between. A friend of Richard Nixon's (and a contributor to his campaign), Khashoggi served as intermediary between the White House and the late King Faisal during the 1973 Mideast War. In a 1972 cable from Beirut, a Lockheed executive reports:

"Impossible submit daily status due security. Khashoggi suspects customer knows code. \*\*

The "customer," of course, was Saudi Arabia.

That Nixon should have used Khashoggi as a confidential agent is strange in view of the Arab's disfavor with the since-murdered king. Faisal was reportedly upset by Khashoggi's ostentation, "corrupting influence," and methods of doing business. A Lockheed letter suggests that the king had good reason to be suspicious:

"During a recent conference in New York with Adnan Khashoggi, he requested that any and all communications touching upon commissions, however innocuous they might seem to the sender, be sent solely to his representative:  
Gerard Boissier  
2 Place du Port  
Geneva, Switzerland  
and that mail should be used, rather than Telex. He begged that no mention of any commissions ever be sent to either Beirut or Saudi Arabia. †

Obviously, Khashoggi feared that electronic communications to Beirut or Saudi Arabia might be intercepted. The subsequent use of Telex to convey sensitive messages concerning commissions implies that codes began to be used after the above letter was written. The distrust is not difficult to understand.

Memorandum from J. A. Davidson to William Cowden, November 25, 1969:

"A decree by the Saudi Arabian Council of Ministers requires a clause in all contracts specifying that no agent has been paid to secure the sale of the equipment in question. This decree further specifies that if any agent fees have been paid, the price to the Kingdom must be reduced by a correspond-

\* Telex sent in 1972 by Lockheed officer D. O. Wood. Words in brackets have been substituted for the code words used. The hyphenated letters have also been decoded.

\*\* Telex dated December 11, 1972.

† Letter from Gerald B. Juliani to Los Angeles, Georgia, and Switzerland; the letter's date is uncertain, but is believed to have been written in July 1966.

ing amount. It is my understanding that LAS [Lockheed Aircraft Services] has accepted this as a necessary part of the risk in doing business in Saudi Arabia. They have signed, and are now negotiating to sign, contracts with such a statement included, but with full intention of paying our representative his usual fees."

The clause forbidding agents, however, became the subject of a public ritual. When contracts were signed in Saudi Arabia, the seller would be asked aloud if he had employed an agent in the country. So that the deception could be carried forward *without actually lying* Khashoggi promised to be out of the country whenever such ceremonies were held.

THE DISTRUST WAS NOT a simple matter confined to the relationship between governments and manufacturers; there was at least as much suspicion between the manufacturers and their own agents—as well as conflicts between the agents themselves. Referring to a "marketing contingency fund... used by the Consultant for 'under the table' compensation to Saudi officials," a memo notes: "We really have no way of knowing if the so-called 'under the table' compensation is ever disbursed to Saudi officials or stops at our Consultant's bank account." \* Not that they actually wanted to know: so long as they remained unwitting, they could not be "held accountable" in either the literal or the figurative sense.

Had Lockheed really wanted to know where the money went, it could probably have figured it out by following the checks that it issued—though this might well have required the services of three lawyers and a wall of concave mirrors. Any such inquiry would have touched upon the firm's use of what it called "subsidiaries of the first and second tier"—Lockheed entities of substance and conduits that existed only on paper for the purposes of tax avoidance. For instance, rather than paying Khashoggi directly, a "second-tier" subsidiary based in Geneva\*\* would employ the "marketing services" of a subsidiary on the "first tier," based in California.† In its turn, the California firm would "subcontract" all or most of those services to Khashoggi's Triad Corporation.

Upon effecting a sale, Triad would bill its California employer; this firm would then dun its Swiss subsidiary. This jurisdictional stratagem resulted in a decided tax advantage for Lockheed: because the highly profitable Saudi Arabian contracts were signed with the Swiss firm, mon-

\* Undated Lockheed memo headed "Saudi Arabian Consultant: Triad Financial Establishment."

\*\* The subsidiary referred to in this example is Lockheed Aircraft International, A G, or LAIAG. "A G" means "incorporated."

† The subsidiary referred to here is Lockheed Aircraft International, Inc. Readers will note that the two firms had, in effect, the same name, albeit one that might be spoken with different accents. On the whole, we may at least be grateful that Khashoggi did not name his Triad Financial Establishment "Lockheed Aircraft International, S.A."



eyes paid by it to the entity in California reduced the former's tax liability in Switzerland. For its part, "California" would show no profit on its putative marketing services, having paid to Khashoggi an amount equal to that which had been paid to it by "Switzerland." The only losers on the deal were taxpayers everywhere. U.S. taxpayers lost because profitable foreign contracts were routed to a Swiss-based vehicle subject to taxes that are much lower than those ordinarily paid in the U.S.\* Swiss taxpayers lost because the dummy in their midst re-routed some of those profits to the U.S.—where, of course, they were "offset" by equal payments to Khashoggi's Triad Establishment.

Following the money, then, it moved from King Faisal in Arabia to Lockheed in Switzerland, from Lockheed in Switzerland to Lockheed in California, from Lockheed in California to Khashoggi in Switzerland. As you see, there's a little "loop" in the middle of the transaction, a seemingly extraneous curlicue that is, in fact, potentially worth millions in tax advantages.

Khashoggi's own maneuvers were no less interesting than Lockheed's. While his ALNASR Trading and Industrial Corporation served as the Riyadh-based beach-head for his efforts in Saudi Arabia, the Triad Financial Establishment was the vehicle through which Khashoggi signed his contracts with Lockheed. Incorporated in the postal enclave of Vaduz, Liechtenstein, Triad's operational center appeared to be in Beirut, Lebanon, while communications pertaining to commissions were routed through Khashoggi's representative, Gerard Boissier, in Geneva. This diversification was further obscured by the legal nature of his agreements with Lockheed. A 1967 "Consultant Agreement,"\*\* for instance, provides that "In consideration of services... furnished by [the Triad Financial Establishment, or 'Consultant']..., Lockheed shall pay... compensation in accordance with the following rates:

Product	Percentage of Selling Price
New Model C-130 Military Airplanes	2%
New Commercial Hercules and Military C-130 Spare Parts and Ground Support Equipment	2%"

It is, by any standards, a modest commission (though potentially quite lucrative). On the same day that the above contract was signed, however, three secret "letter agreements" were prepared, "supplementing" the commissions established in the original contract. The first such letter agreement provided for additional commissions of 5 percent and 13 percent, respectively, on the selling price of C-130s and related equipment. The second letter agreement stated that "Lockheed agrees to pay to Consultant... a special fee in the amount of \$41,000 for each such [C-130] airplane for which Lockheed is paid the full contract price of \$2,670,000." The third letter agreement doubled and tripled commissions agreed upon

\* A maximum of 15 percent versus a maximum of 48 percent.

\*\* The agreement is dated September 1, 1967.

for the sale of *commercial* aircraft to Saudi Arabia. Thus Khashoggi's commissions amounted to as much as 16 percent, and in no instance went lower than 7 percent of the sales price. Even with these amounts, plus subsequent "incentives" and contingency funds, things did not always go smoothly in the wadis.

"RUSH RUSH RUSH

"Strongly suspect machinery stalled for lack of grease Stop. Is former air attache really pushing query? Urge you insist agent make move now to keep log rolling Stop..."

An earlier memorandum marked "Confidential." reports:

1. — is completely disenchanted with Adnan Khashoggi. He indicated that he never received the \$150,000 that was agreed to between Max, Adnan and — during their Paris meeting last year. He further indicated a dislike of Adnan and said while he likes Adil (Khashoggi, Adnan's brother) he is unwilling to deal with him because of his distrust of Adnan.
2. At the moment all LAIAG programs are in the 'deep freeze...'
3. ... The reason for 2... is 1, above.
4. — showed Harley (Snyder) his statements on total payments made to LAIAG. He said he cannot understand why Adnan says that he (Adnan) has not received any money in view of these payments. — statement to Harley was that he feels Adnan is lying to him.
5. — indicated that he was told by Adnan that Adnan is only getting 2% commission."

**B**ECAUSE SAUDI OFFICIALS were angered by the slowness with which Khashoggi made payments, and by their distrust of him, they prevailed upon Lockheed to compel Khashoggi to make a formal assignment of portions of his commissions to various numbered accounts at Geneva's Crédit Suisse. Effectively, this meant that Lockheed was responsible for making *direct* payments to such corporate dummies as the Lauvier and Cantona "Establishments." Incorporated in Vaduz, Liechtenstein, both "firms" seem to have played a purely passive role in Lockheed's affairs. Such "assignments," however, did not always diminish Khashoggi's own receipts. Viz.:

"This will confirm that Triad Financial Establishment irrevocably commits... to Cantona Establishment... a portion of its marketing fees equivalent to one percent of the contract price.... Such... assignment to Cantona Establishment is contingent upon... [Lockheed's] increasing Triad's marketing fees... by one percent of contract price."\*\* Other payments received by Khashoggi, includ-

\* Cable to Robert Jackman in Paris from J. H. Wilkinson in Jidda, Saudi Arabia.

\*\* January 11, 1973, letter from Triad's Beirut-based Louis Lauler to Lockheed's senior vice-president of marketing, Duane Wood.



ing \$400,000 earmarked by Lockheed as a "special adjustment," were disguised and added to subsequent contracts with Saudi Arabia, so that Lockheed's agent was always reimbursed.

"Reimbursed," that is, on the dubious assumption that he actually made the payments that he claims to have made. As a memo quoted earlier reported: "[Lockheed officials] really have no way of knowing if the so-called 'under the table' compensation is ever disbursed to Saudi officials or stops at [Khashoggi's] bank account." The direct "assignments" of cash to the accounts of Cantona and Lauvier were apparently earmarked for third parties, but there is no way to be certain what happened to all or a part of this money. There is, however, an internal Lockheed memorandum that clarifies the nature of one such assignment and provides a remarkable insight into Khashoggi's astuteness.

Memorandum dated January 22, 1974:

"A proposal for the sale of ten C-130H aircraft was presented to \_\_\_\_\_ on November 14, 1973. These aircraft were priced at \$6.3 million each, which sum included the normal commissions plus \$200,000 of 'negotiating money.' This \$200,000 was included in the price at the insistence of A.K. [Adnan Khashoggi] and, in theory, can be committed by A.K. and/or the Gelac [Lockheed's Georgia plant] salesman for a price reduction or by A.K. alone for under the table payoffs. For this particular deal A.K. has taken the position that all negotiating money not negotiated away would go to TRIAD as a bonus.\* P.K.\*\* had been told by A.K. of this 'bonus' arrangement. However, A.K. told P.K. there was \$150,000 rather than the actual [amount].

"\_\_\_\_\_ on November 28 insisted that our price of \$6.3 million (per plane) was too high . . .

"Over the phone from Beirut, Temp Walker received approval . . . to reduce the price of the aircraft to \$6.1 million, if necessary to get a quick decision from \_\_\_\_\_ . . .

"A.K. was told of the decision to go to \$6.1 million, if necessary, thereby giving up all of the negotiating money. A.K. agreed . . . , but asked Temp to hold out . . . as long as possible.

"Temp Walker met with \_\_\_\_\_, Gen. \_\_\_\_\_, Dorm Viers and Sal Aswad at 9 a.m., December 1. \_\_\_\_\_ accepted our latest schedule, but insisted he must have a price reduction. After about two hours of negotiating, Temp Walker agreed to reduce the price to \$6.2 million . . . The contract was signed . . .

"On December 3, P.K. sent word to Temp Walker that he desired a meeting. Temp

\* "Negotiating money" was a gratuitous sum added to Lockheed contracts in deference to the Arabs' penchant for bargaining. It was a sum that would be given up, with apparent reluctance, in contract-negotiation sessions. Often, though, the Americans proved to be better rug merchants than the Arabs, and a large slice of the negotiating money remained as a part of the price.

\*\* Other Lockheed memoranda make it clear that "P.K." refers to Prince Khalid.

met with P.K. at . . . P.K.'s villa. P.K. was upset that Temp had given away \$100,000 of the negotiating money . . . . P.K. then informed Temp that he and A.K. had formed a new company (SAVERIA) to market all C-130s in Saudi Arabia. P.K. said the split was to be 60% for A.K. and 40% for P.K. He then asked if there was a letter in Lockheed explaining this new company. Temp knew nothing of this and told P.K. so . . . .

"P.K. then stated he had reason to believe the total commission paid by Lockheed was about 8% plus the negotiating money . . . P.K. (repeatedly) asked Temp to assure that P.K.'s 40% share would meet or exceed \$175,000. He implied he had a commitment of \$125,000 to \_\_\_\_\_ and needed to know. Temp again repeated he did not know, whereupon P.K. asked Temp to make an estimate, hinting that he could still influence \_\_\_\_\_ to delay the contract should Temp refuse.

"Temp thereupon did a rough calculation and told P.K. that if the 8% was correct and the 60-40 split was correct, he would be in good shape. Based on a rough calculation, 40% of the supposed 8% would be about \$225,000."

(Breaking into the memo: had Temp thought about it, he would have recalled P.K.'s allusion to his \$125,000 debt to \_\_\_\_\_. That debt was P.K.'s justification for needing to realize at least \$175,000 from the sale. The point is that P.K. incorrectly believed that the commissions to be paid would equal 8 percent of the cost of a single aircraft—plus the entirety of the bonus money attaching to each of the aircraft. Thus, receiving 40 percent of 8 percent of \$6.2 million, P.K. would easily realize his goal of at least \$175,000—but the real dough, so far as he was mistakenly concerned, rested with the \$150,000 per plane "bonus." This money, if not "negotiated away," would provide him with an additional \$60,000 for each plane sold, or an "extra" \$600,000 on the deal. The commission itself, incorrectly thought to equal no more than a small percentage of a single plane's cost, was potentially less than one-third of the money P.K. might reap through the bonus. By "negotiating away" \$100,000 of the supposed \$150,000 bonus, Temp seemed to have reduced P.K.'s bonus share from \$600,000 to a mere \$200,000. Predictably, the prince was furious. And Temp, of course, was confused, incorrectly assuming that P.K. had a commitment to \_\_\_\_\_ of \$125,000 per plane, whereas, in fact, it appears to have been a simple, one-time debt. Had Temp understood that, he would have told P.K. that his 40 percent of 8 percent, plus remaining bonus, would amount to more than \$2.25 million on the deal—about three times the amount envisioned in his wildest dreams.) Following this confusing session in the prince's villa, the memorandum continues:

"Temp Walker, D. O. Wood, Ned Ridings and Lew Laufer\* met with A.K. in Beirut to resolve the flap caused by P.K. phoning Lew Laufer and asking for an account—

\* Laufer was Khashoggi's "man in Beirut" at the Triad offices.





Give a bottle  
and be highly esteemed.

Or give the case.  
And be revered.





**A whole generation  
grew up with it.  
And now...**

27 years and 33 million cars later, there's a whole new generation of Volkswagens. The 1977 Rabbit, Dasher, and Scirocco. Three of the most remarkable cars ever built, these Volkswagens feature highly advanced engineering. Such as fuel-injection. Front-wheel drive. Front-disc brakes. And precise rack-and-pinion steering. In economy, they're everything you would expect from Volkswagen. All three get 24 MPG in the city. Rabbit and Scirocco get 37 MPG on the highway, Dasher gets 36. (EPA estimates with standard transmission. Actual mileage depends on how and where you drive, optional equipment, and the car's condition.)

# A new generation for a new generation

## **Dasher.** Our sensible luxury car

It's the first elegant automobile to come along with all the virtues of Volkswagen. Conservative on the exterior. Extravagant on the interior.

With plush upholstery. Fully reclining seats. Rich carpeting. And even a quartz-crystal clock.

In performance, it can travel from 0 to 50 in only 8.0 seconds. In safety, the

Dasher has dual-diagonal braking circuits and negative steering roll radius—which helps maintain directional stability in the event of a front tire blow out. What's more, the

Dasher is available in a wagon as well as a sedan.







**Rabbit.** Hailed by automotive experts as the specific kind of car Detroit will be building in the 80's. Six years in the making, that car is ready now, when America needs Small outside. Big inside. With the rear seat folded down, it has more trunk space than some American cars twice its size. And from 0 to 60, it will out-accelerate a Jaguar XJ6-L\*. Room. Performance. Economy. It's more Volkswagen than you've ever had before.

# n of Volkswagens ion of Americans.

**Scirocco.** It's the Volkswagen that people can't believe is a Volkswagen. It looks like an Italian sportscar because Italy's famous Giugiaro designed it. And it performs like a German sportscar because it has a powerful fuel-injected overhead cam engine, standard radial tires, and a unique suspension system for incredible handling. If ever there was any

question about Volkswagen's qualifications on the race track, let it be known that Scirocco just won the 1976 Trans Am Manufacturers Championship for cars under two liters.

The 1977 Rabbit, Dasher, and Scirocco. A whole new generation.

Because times have changed, America.

And so have Volkswagens.



\*Test conducted by Motor Trend





The spirit of Marlboro in a low tar cigarette.

# Marlboro Lights



Lighter in taste. Lower in tar.  
And still offers up the same quality  
that has made Marlboro famous.

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined  
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

13 mg. "tar," 0.8 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette. FTC Report Apr. '76.



ing. A.K. did not seem particularly disturbed for he apparently guessed that P.K. was talking about a total payment to P.K. of about \$275,000 and that P.K. would be overjoyed when he actually got more. A story was developed to present to P.K. which would support the actual split A.K. intended to make with P.K.

"Under the SAVERIA company, A.K. has told P.K. that the total commission paid by Lockheed is 3% of the sales price plus 50% of any negotiating monies remaining. A.K. and P.K. split this 60%-40%.

"On December 10 in Riyadh [those who'd met earlier in Beirut] met with P.K. to settle matters. It soon became evident that P.K. was not upset over the percentage commission, 3% of the total contract being much more than P.K. had expected, but was very upset over Temp giving up 'his' negotiating money unnecessarily. . . . To further complicate matters, A.K. had told P.K. there was \$150,000 negotiating money rather than the actual \$200,000. It was finally agreed by D.O. Wood that P.K. would receive his commission (through SAVERIA Co.) as though Temp had not negotiated away \$100,000."\*

Poor Temp. How could he have explained to P.K. that the "negotiating money" was mere peanuts, placed in the contract as a sop to Arab haggling, and *meant* to be bargained away? As for Khashoggi, he must have seemed both a genius and a benefactor to P.K., having negotiated a deal with Lockheed that provided Saveria Establishment with 3 percent of \$62 million rather than 8 percent of a mere \$6.2 million. And, as for P.K., he undoubtedly regarded himself as quite the wily Arab, forcing the decadent Americans to cave in to demands for the replacement of "his share" of the \$100,000 in mad money.

**A**DNAN KHASHOGGI was far from Lockheed's only agent, and Saudi Arabia was certainly not its only customer. In Italy, for instance, Lockheed's marketing of the C-130 transport required substantial contributions to Christian Democrats and a host of government ministers. Ovidio Lefebvre, a rich and obviously well-connected attorney in Rome, served as the aircraft firm's local "cut-out," making "direct payments" and channeling larger sums through a variety of conduits and fronts with such names as the Ikaria Establishment (of Liechtenstein) and the Temperate Zone Research Foundation (of Panama and Geneva).\*\* Competing against a Franco-Ger-

manic consortium known for its unholy pragmatism in matters economic, Lockheed agents feared for their lives. In a letter from the Grand Hotel in Rome, Lockheed attorney Roger Smith writes on March 28, 1969:

*Please accept my apologies for addressing you on scratch paper and in my execrable handwriting, but I am in no position to disclose to local Third Persons the contents hereof. . . .*

*Please hold onto your seat, as what follows may be a shocker to you. . . . Ovidio Lefebvre states that Gelac . . . must be prepared to go as high as \$120,000 per airplane for the cumshaw pot. He hopes it will be less . . . but says that such is a nasty part of life in the arena in which we are trying to offset the same type tactics by a combination (this time) of both the French and the Germans. (In the last go-round, the French beat us single-handedly.)*

*Furthermore, he said that, unlike in the P-3 matter, there will not again be a face-to-face negotiation between a representative of the 'party' and Lockheed representatives, but that he will be told, probably, by the Antelope Cobbler (get out your little black book—mine is dated October 15, 1965)\* just how much the 'party' demands.*

*Further, there will be the Cobbler himself, and Pun, and various others. . . .*

*In this connection, he insists that he will only give names and figures to one person. . . . He says he wishes it to be me. . . . If you want it to be someone else, then it must be someone who will be able to be here in person when needed since he will not put any of the information in the mails. If I get the information I would propose to seal it up and deliver it, so sealed, to our Paris lawyer for safe-keeping, with instructions to deliver it to the President of Lockheed in the event of my death, disability, or disappearance. He said he wanted it to be me . . . because I am a lawyer. (Doesn't that just make you available as a repository for guilty knowledge??) . . .*

*I hope you keep this letter on a very strict need-to-know basis with respect to your compatriots. As for the compensation to Third Persons part, we are dealing with dynamite that could blow Lockheed right out of Italy with terrible repercussions.\*\**

The nature of that "dynamite" is spelled out in an unsigned Lockheed memorandum entitled "Italian C-130 Contract Problems." Discussing delays in the payment of "commissions and fees," the memo acknowledges the fact that "the delay . . . is damaging our Corporate image with key personnel in the Ministry of Defense† and in other Italian Government circles." Recapitulating previous payments, the memo reports that \$78,000 was paid to "the previous Minister and certain members of his team, who are now in the Ministry and will review the contract. We have recently agreed to an additional payment for special compensation to the Minister for his

\* Antelope Cobbler is a former prime minister of Italy. The "little black book" is a reference to Lockheed codebooks, changed at regular intervals.

\*\* Letter from Smith to Charles Valentine, director of contracts.

† Italicized portions supplied from censored documents by the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations.

\* Memorandum dated January 22, 1974.

\*\* Payments to Ikaria were apparently destined for the Minister of Defense, whereas payments to the Temperate Zone Research Foundation were mostly earmarked for Italian political parties.



activities in connection with the price increase that was negotiated in December."

Listing \$1,680,000 in "Promotional Expenses," the memo notes that "More than 85% of this is for the Minister's political party." Despite the Italian bureaucracy, the memo says, the contract has progressed "in record time." Nevertheless, "The Defense Minister is... suspicious that the reason for our lack of action is that we are merely waiting for a government change so no payment to his party will be necessary. ... The Minister's current position is that he will not process the contract further until the second (\$575,000) payment is made to him. He feels that this is his last really effective pressure point, and apparently he intends to use it." Foreseeing a cumulative cash investment of \$7.8 million in the program over the next four months, the memo urges immediate payment to the Minister despite Lockheed's worsening cash-flow problems. "With the known instability of the Italian Government," it says, "we consider it imperative to assure that the contract is firmed up as soon as possible. The last thing we want is a new government and a new set of players at this stage of the game, and this possibility is getting stronger all the time, according to *Lefebvre*."

**T**HE PROCEDURE OF describing bribes, kickbacks, and commissions as "promotional expenses" seems to be a standard one. "Thanks for your Telex... concerning Dural Payments.... Invoices covering both extraordinary and normal expenses... and quote publicity expenses... breakdown as follows." \* The "quote publicity expenses" are then shown to exceed "normal expenses" by a factor of three. The semantic issue was important, not only from a tax perspective, but in terms of who footed the bill. "I understood you... planned to review present outstanding invoices to separate the true quote extraordinary unquote expenses from the gifts. I assumed that [Dural] was going to be asked to swallow the latter and we pay only the former." \*\*

"Dural" is Nezih Dural, Lockheed's agent in Ankara, Turkey. Distrusted by Lockheed ("It is disturbing to contemplate the possibility that Nezih is racking us a bit"), † Dural was subjected to closer scrutiny than most agents: over his protests, for instance, he was made to explain expenses involving thousands of dollars—which, as it turned out, had been spent in nightclubs and at Disneyland. And he differed from some other agents in other ways as well: he was, for example, provided a budget for industrial espionage. "Mr. Dural has now advised me... that the requirements to establish firm competitive data intelligence will require an expenditure of... \$5,000 per month. ... The intelligence data... [are] required to enable us to

know what the competition is doing." \* Apparently, the intelligence effort was successful. In a letter to Lockheed's Beirut representative, Dural mentions the budget for spookery and reminds his contact that "I brought a nice package present to Burbank. I am sure that you will have heard about this package." \*\* Four months later, following a sale of Starfighters to Turkey, an interdepartmental communication orders the issuance of "a commission check to Nezih Dural... in the amount of \$240,000." "When this check is ready," the IDC continues, "it will be delivered to the Geneva office, where it will be held for Dural." †

How Lockheed selected its agents is no secret: the firm simply hired the most politically and socially influential people it could find.

Letter from N. S. Orwat to M. M. Egan, entitled "Discussion with Vice-Admiral Heinz Kuhnle, Chief of the German Navy," July 9, 1973:

"Margaret and I were invited to dinner in Düsseldorf by [Lockheed consultant Christian] Steinrucke. As you know, Steinrucke has a rather magnificent home... and entertains in what might moderately be termed the grand old style. Certainly the dinner... for 16 people was as splendidly presented and served as any I have attended in Europe. I am told—and I can believe it!—that Germans seldom turn down a dinner invitation from the Steinruckes.

"At dinner were Dr. and Mrs. Mommsen (he was Defense Minister Schmidt's Deputy in the Ministry of Defense... and is now head of Thyssen, one of Germany's largest companies), several other top industrialists, a high official from the Finance Ministry, and Vice Admiral Kuhnle, Chief of the German Navy, and Mrs. Kuhnle.

"After dinner, I was able to have a private talk in the garden with Admiral Kuhnle. He had visited the U.S. a short time ago as the guest of Admiral Zumwalt. Bud is a classmate of mine from the National War College, which helped to establish the basis for a friendly conversation.

"Kuhnle is a great admirer of Zumwalt and went on at some length about his admirable qualities, notably his ability in the face of a restricted Defense Budget to get more than his fair share.... This permitted me to inquire about Kuhnle's own budgetary problems. They are severe....

"When I inquired about the S-3, he seemed nonplussed. Either he did not know anything about the S-3, or he knew just enough to be dangerous.... I could not press the point because the time had come to join the other guests.

\* June 1975 Lockheed Telex.

\*\* May 1, 1973, Telex from Lockheed's Allen Meyer.

† Interdepartmental communication from Allen Meyer to Walter C. Smith, head "Consultant Arrangements—Turkey," May 9, 1973.

\* IDC from Walter C. Smith to D. M. Wilder, May 7, 1973.

\*\* Letter from Dural to Robert F. Conley, November 30, 1973.

† IDC from A. A. Boon Hartsinck to L. H. Arnold, March 11, 1974.



"I was impressed once again . . . with the political, military, financial and industrial associations that Steinrucke has in high circles. . . . I am confident that Steinrucke could be helpful to us by putting us in touch—under favorable circumstances—with the type of people to whom we would wish to communicate."\*

The S-3A is an antisubmarine aircraft of which Kuhnle, as head of the German Navy, should have known. His host, Steinrucke, was Lockheed's agent in selling the plane and, according to his contract, stood to make "\$100,000 per S-3A sold to the German Navy, for the first 15 aircraft only. Additional sales will be subject to new commission negotiations."\* And, while it may be true that Steinrucke entertained "in what might moderately be termed the grand old style," it's unlikely that it cost him very much. Besides contractual pin money of \$1,000 per month, the aircraft firm provided him with discretionary sums in varying amounts. Thus, "In discussions with *German consultant* last week he said that the *Jetstar* contract should be signed in September. However, he tells me that he has committed *forty-thousand Deutsch-marks* to the *political* parties and for which he will produce receipts. In addition he wants *one-hundred-thousand Deutsch-marks* for his commission and from which he will have to meet certain other *obligations*\*\* and for which there will be no receipts."†

It would be unfair to suggest that the propriety of all this did not bother some Lockheed officials, though their main concern seems to have been "deniability" and the "letter of the law," *vide* a telegram from Steinrucke's Lockheed contact, N. S. Orwat: "Reference is made to . . . my recent agreement with Christian Steinrucke. It is my understanding that *an agreement of this kind may be illegal in Germany*, and I would ask that copies be limited only to those with a strict need to know. Because of security reasons, Steinrucke asked that we attempt to write an agreement that did not mention the type of aircraft involved. Attached is a draft that attempts to do just that. . . . Since Roger Smith helped to prepare it, I am sure it is legally sound" [Orwat's emphasis] ††

In rare instances, there were even more substantive doubts, worries about the unethical nature of the dealings. A 1965 memo anent Indonesia, for instance, discusses the unusual circumstance of the customer demanding that the firm *raise* its prices so that the agent (in this case the customer as well) will have a correspondingly higher "commission." "D. J. Haughton and I discussed this. I stated I felt we should hold at \$1,874,000; that this hanky-panky had gone far enough. We discussed the various ethics of it, and agreed that . . . it just isn't

right, and there is a limit somewhere to going along with this."\* (As it happened, the limit was soon exceeded.)

Lockheed's problems in Indonesia, though, were in no way confined to ethical matters. Concerning the firm's original agent, "Ike" Dasaad, a Lockheed executive wrote: "There is always the possibility that the present government is merely using Dasaad and may have him on the list for liquidation somewhere down the line—but there is no reason to think so right now."\*\* Indeed, the question of whether Dasaad would be liquidated or continue to function as Lockheed's agent stimulated a spate of secret inquiries: "[Ned] Ridings met with Colonel Slade, USAF air attaché, and inquired if the U.S. Embassy had any means of checking out and evaluating Dasaad's position with the new government. Slade stated that he could have the Embassy C.I.A. personnel check this out."† The reports of the CIA, the Embassy, various Army generals, and local businessmen, however, were completely contradictory: "well connected," said one; "in good graces," said another; "the Dasaads are completely without influence," said a third.

But the *real* problem in Indonesia was far simpler than Dasaad's complicated status: that is, the Indonesian generals simply didn't understand the etiquette of bribery. They insisted on *direct* payments from Lockheed, and refused to consider the establishment of what one Lockheed official called "a nominal buffer." Instead the Indonesian Air Force (AURI) established a numbered account in Singapore. Called "the Widows and Orphans Fund," it was in the name of the omnipresent—(believed to be a different—than the—who was active in Saudi Arabia). A somewhat fearsome character given to lethal mood swings,—declined a Lockheed request that a "third party," or cut-out, be used to launder the commissions being paid. "The advantages to be gained in mutual protection were pointed out; however,—summarily refused this suggestion on the basis that a third party would have to be paid, which would only dilute the AURI 'commission.'" †† The same memo warns that "If Lockheed elects to do business in the prescribed AURI fashion, some of the hazards that we might be exposed to are:

"1. Since we have no agency agreement in Indonesia, we have no legal means of charging off these 'commissions.' Thus, they may not be considered allowable deductions by the Internal Revenue Service.

"2. If such payments should some day become public knowledge the repercussions could be damaging to Lockheed's name and reputation."

\* IDC headed "Agreement with Steinrucke/Germany on S-3A Commissions," dated March 22, 1974, prepared by A. A. Boon Hartsinck.

\*\* This may be the first time that the word *obligations* has ever needed to be encoded.

† Lockheed Telex dated August 30, 1972. Italicized portions decoded, and provided by the Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations.

†† Letter to R. P. Witte from N. S. Orwat, April 1, 1974.

\* "Lockheed Private Data," memo of W. G. Myers, June 11, 1965.

\*\* "Lockheed Private Data," memo of D. D. Stone, November 15, 1966.

† Letter from Ned Ridings to Dallas Cederberg, August 8, 1967, entitled "Lockheed Agent in Indonesia."

†† IDC from P. F. Dobbins to R. I. Mitchell, May 14, 1971.



Despite this clairvoyant analysis, Lockheed "elected to do business the AURI way," modifying it only to the extent that "all commissions paid into Singapore must go through a 'sanitizing' process involving [Jack] Clutter's office [in Tokyo]."

With the Widows and Orphans Fund established in accordance with \_\_\_\_\_'s demands, Lockheed had little trouble thereafter. A report of subsequent encounters with AURI's leaders notes, "\_\_\_\_\_ was in a very jovial mood at both meetings. I learned that he had been advised of the deposit of the \$100,000 'commission' in the Singapore bank just prior to our arrival. This, undoubtedly, accounted for his benign mood." \*\*

Undoubtedly.

# THE JAPANESE CONNECTION

WHEN MITSUYASU MAENO piloted a rented Piper Cherokee into Yoshio Kodama's veranda this past spring, he wore the headband and uniform of an Imperial Army pilot and called out, as he crashed, "Long live the emperor!" It had been the battle cry of Japan's kamikaze pilots, and it had not been heard, in quite those circumstances, for precisely thirty years.

Maeno's sacrificial gesture, made in response to headlines implicating Kodama in the Lockheed scandals, appalled Japan. Not only had the country "lost face" through revelations of its government's corruption, but now the scandal was twisted in such a way that half-forgotten stereotypes were exhumed and paraded before the world's press. In need of some "fresh air," Tokyo was given a breath of the "divine wind." Even as his plane crashed, Tokyo porn palaces flickered with images of Maeno's couplings in the abysmal sex flicks of the Orient. Because it was simultaneously tragic and absurd, occurring against a background of national shame, Maeno's suicidal attack hinted at a collective Japanese pathos: the heroically suicidal youths of the second world war, celebrated for the purity of heart perceived in the manner of their deaths, had come to this. In the new Japan of hamburgers, hard rock, Pachinko, and Quaaludes, dignity proved impossible even in the practice of ritual suicide.

And there was an even deeper irony to the affair.

\* IDC from Dallas Cederberg to B. H. Menke, May 16, 1973, "Subject: Indonesia."

\*\* IDC from F. S. McKinney to G. B. Methvin, May 10, 1971, "Subject: Visit to AURI Headquarters, Djakarta, Indonesia, April 28-29, 1971."

Maeno's intended victim, Yoshio Kodama, was himself one of the foremost celebrants of the divine wind, having only recently called for a renaissance of its fighting spirit. It was Kodama, moreover, who'd provided the kamikaze pilots of the second world war with the planes they'd flown to such lethal effect. And it was Kodama who, in the plush Okura Hotel, had wept (discreetly) as Tokyo's assembled elite listened to the premier performance of his neo-Fascist march, "The Song of Race"; composed in 1971, it was a tune that called for a kamikaze coup d'état to restore the fading emperor to power and Japan to glory.

So when Maeno dive-bombed Kodama, it was not just masonry and metal that collided, but the depleted residue of apposite ages.

It would be surprising if Kodama did not have some sympathy for Maeno's attempt on his life, however much the man and the attempt may have shamed him. Crippled by a stroke that coincided with news of his role in the Lockheed affair, Kodama has had a year of seclusion in which to meditate upon a career of achievements and crimes in Gothic proportions.

Yoshio Kodama was an orphan raised in poverty by increasingly remote relatives. At eleven, he was duped into the service of a Korean sweatshop, an iron foundry manned by consumptive youths who were held against their will each night in barrackslike hostels owned by the company. In a practical sense, they were the unpaid property of the firm for which they worked.

Finally escaping from this servitude, Kodama made his way to Tokyo in 1929, having made the transition from childhood to adulthood without any intervening stage of adolescence. His only assets, at the time, were a few unshakable convictions derived from his experiences and the fantasies that attended them. He was convinced, for instance, that his family was a noble one, temporarily impoverished, but rooted in a tradition of samurai glory. Linking his own destiny to Japan's, he emerged from the Tokyo slums as a terrorist leader and radical patriot. An ultranationalist at fifteen, Kodama quite naturally immersed himself in the political bedlam of depression Japan, joining a score of conspiratorial "societies" with such names as the Blood Brotherhood, Holy War Execution League, Federation of Radical Patriotic Workers, and Capital Rise Asia Academy. These societies, many of them murderous and fly-by-night affairs, provided Kodama with a precarious living. Ostensibly political, they were often no more than street gangs manipulated for private ends by wealthy industrialists, the police, and the Army. They fought the Communists and each other with equal frequency, and underwent a continual factionalization. Often, the societies consisted of no more than a few friends, a post-office box, and gelignite.

IT WAS IN THIS RIGHT-WING milieu, part underworld and part underground, that Kodama plotted in 1932 to conduct a battue of the emperor's entourage—a state massacre that would eliminate at one stroke the most powerful men in the realm. The plot went awry in a sort of



"townhouse explosion," and Kodama was shot. In fact, according to former New York *Times* reporter Hugh Byas, Kodama shot himself when apprehended. "He died a few days later," Byas reported, "and was given a magnificent funeral conducted by Shinto priests and attended by nearly a thousand members of patriotic and political societies." \*

Contrary to this mysterious report, Kodama had been sent to jail rather than the grave. Imprisoned for three years without a trial, he was held incommunicado for much of the time, finally going to court in the last days of 1935. On conviction, he spent another year in prison, devoting his time to haiku. In his spare moments, he recalls, "My greatest pleasure was to gaze upon the sparse grass and flowers [of the exercise yard]. In season, when the cosmos were flowering, strong winds used to blow, breaking the stems of the flowers. On such occasions, I felt as badly at the sight of the windblown cosmos, as if I had my own arms broken. Often, I used to put splints on the broken stems of these flowers, but on such occasions, there were no leftist thoughts—only a deep love and a feeling of adoration of nature welled in my heart." \*\*

It is a biographical curiosity that Kodama, in and out of jail throughout his youth, never returned directly to Tokyo from prison, but seemed always to have some business in Manchuria, returning home only after a journey through China. It seems worth mentioning because, at that time, Manchuria had been seized by the rebellious Japanese Expeditionary Forces. A puppet kingdom, Manchukuo, had been established by the Army and served, for a while, as its plaything. It was, in a sense, one of the most important places in the world: its temporary success encouraged the Japanese Army's dream of expansion and led directly to its imperial rampage in subsequent years.

Why Kodama should have visited Manchuria so often has never been adequately explained. U.S. Army intelligence reports suggest that he performed espionage missions and that he organized a China-wide network of Manchurian spies and collaborationists. For his part, Kodama says that he was sickened by the atrocities committed by the Japanese Army, atrocities that violated not only the rules of war, but those of nature as well, making a mockery of the samurai's chivalric code.

Despite this view, his political and military connections, coupled with his outspoken advocacy of Japan's southern expansion, combined to make him one of the Orient's most successful clandestine operators. In Shanghai, China, and Vietnam, Kodama undertook a series of secret missions, beginning in 1937, for the Army and

Kempei Tai (secret police); four years later he was entrusted with the task of supplying the Japanese Naval Air Force in wartime. Establishing the Kodama Kikan, or Kodama Agency, he built a financial empire from a handful of rooms in the Shin-Asia Hotel, an empire that was to determine the political course of postwar Japan. According to a report of the U.S. Army's Counterintelligence Corps, Kodama accomplished the Navy's ends at gunpoint, taking hostages and forcing Chinese villagers to sell him the goods he demanded; paying a pittance to the Chinese, he then resold the goods at fabulous profits to the Imperial Navy. Systematically looting China of its raw materials, he amassed a personal fortune of colossal dimensions. To accomplish that, he acquired heroin on the black market in Tokyo, traded it for tungsten in Shanghai, sold the tungsten for yen, used the yen to buy guns, sold the guns in Borneo for gold, exchanged the gold for industrial diamonds and, in the meanwhile, cornered the Shanghai radium market by emptying the hospitals of their supplies. In addition, he operated salt mines, iron mines, farms, fisheries, an orphanage, a molybdenum mine, and secret munitions factories throughout central China. In his heroin deals, he sometimes burned the consumer, and there were unproven allegations that the yen spent in China was counterfeit (not that it mattered, since it was useless to the Chinese in any case). He came to be regarded as "the man behind the Kempei Tai," financing its Shanghai office in return for its "physical support." Intelligence reports show that this was sometimes bloody work, revealing that Kodama was suspected of assassinating his partner.

In 1945 Kodama was thirty-four years old, a brigadier general, a Cabinet adviser, and the possessor of a financial hoard that included half-a-roomful of platinum, sacks of industrial diamonds, an undetermined amount of foreign currency, and upward of 3.5 billion yen\*—not including illiquid assets. Just how much Kodama was worth, however, could not be exactly ascertained. All documents of the Kodama Kikan were burned at the end of the war, and Kodama himself admits that he hid most of his wealth.

Imprisoned as a war-crimes suspect in 1946, he'd been attempting to organize a new political party for Japan, a party emulating those which governed the United States. This pretense of democracy, however, failed to deceive American Occupational authorities. An intelligence assessment of Kodama concludes:

"In summary, KODAMA appears to be a man doubly dangerous. His long and fanatic involvement in ultra-nationalistic activities, violence included, and his skill in appealing to youth make him a man who, if released from internment, would surely be a grave security risk. In addition, there is the outstanding probability to be reckoned with that, as a result of his hearty cooperation with the war effort, he has a large fortune to back-up whatever activities he might see fit to undertake. His success in the difficulties of securing supplies

\* Hugh Byas, *Government by Assassination*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1942), pp. 238-39. Mr. Byas was stationed in Tokyo by the *Times* for many years prior to World War II.

\*\* Yoshio Kodama, *I Was Defeated* (Japan: Radiopress, 1959), pp. 32-47. Written while imprisoned as a war-crimes suspect, Kodama's fiercely anti-Communist memoir is a self-serving document submitted to the Occupation authorities in an effort to secure his release. The non sequitur about the absence of "leftist thoughts" suggests that Kodama appropriated to himself an action he witnessed and admired in another—a "leftist."

\* About \$175 million at the time.



in wartime for the Navy mark him as one who could very easily become a big-time operator in Japan's reconstruction period. Persistent rumors as to his blackmarket profits in his Shanghai period, plus his known opportunism, are forceful arguments that he would be as unscrupulous in trade as he was in ultranationalism. KODAMA's past performance indicates that he is the sort of man G-2 considers more dangerous than either the superannuated ideologists or the professional men who aided Japan's wartime effort for reasons of patriotism or survival of their professional interests. . . . Dangerous potentialities for the future."\*

Another report, prepared by Kodama's chief inquisitor, Lt. Frank O'Neill, concludes: "I am satisfied that KODAMA or his associates . . . for whom he is responsible committed numerous acts of violence in China in the acquisition by foul means or fair of commodities and goods [belonging to] the Chinese."\*\*

Shortly after this assessment was made, and in spite of it, Kodama was released without trial. Walking out of prison with him was Nobusuke Kishi (elected prime minister nine years later), and seventeen other war-crimes suspects who would become the financial and political spine of a new, democratic Japan. Why was Kodama released? The last pages of his diary give a clue: "Who, in this age of ideological confusion, is capable of bringing the laboring masses, influenced completely by Communist ideals, and rampaging like a wounded beast, under control? . . . The bestial roar of the Communist Party [reaches] into my cell through the barred windows of Sugamo Prison . . . I can hear the dull thud of the marching feet of thousands of Communists advancing toward the bolshevization of Japan. . . . Who will fight the last fight with them? Behind the steel bars of Sugamo this young life of mine, burning with the passionate ardor of a love of my country and of justice, strains against the bars that hold it in."† A few days after Kodama's release, Lt. Frank O'Neill was reported to have predicted: "Ten years from today this man Kodama is going to be a great leader of Japan."†† He was right.

Working behind the scenes, Kodama established the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), using funds hoarded from his Shanghai days; it soon became the most important political party in Asia, leading some to suspect that Kodama's release from Sugamo had been arranged by the fledgling CIA. Whether that is so or not, Kodama consolidated his hold over Japan's ultranationalists and

reestablished contact with anti-Communist gangsters and street punks from the Tokyo Ginza. By 1958 he had again become one of the most powerful men in the Orient, almost as influential in Korea as he was in Japan. In that year, he signed the first of many contracts with the Lockheed Corporation, promising to reverse Japan's decision to outfit its born-again air force with Grumman F-11-Fs. To accomplish that reversal, he relied upon, among others, an American-born espionage agent who'd lost his citizenship by working for the Japanese in occupied Manchuria; a politician who was later jailed for embezzlement; an extreme right-wing publisher; various war-crimes suspects who'd shared the anxieties of Sugamo; and the organizer of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Gen. Minoru Genda. Appointed Commander in Chief of the Japanese Air Force (through the backing of Kodama and Kishi, then prime minister and chief of the National Defense Council), Genda was wildly enthusiastic about the Lockheed Starfighter. After testing it in California, he returned to Japan with the recommendation that only the Starfighter would do. At about the same time, Genda's recommendation was echoed by a special delegation of German Air Force officers who'd arrived in Tokyo to persuade recalcitrant Japanese of the Starfighter's dubious superiority. Supported, then, by Japan's most honored military figure, by its respected ally in the preceding war, by the prime minister, and by Kodama's political manipulations, Lockheed accomplished the impossible. Grumman's contract was cancelled. A few months later, General Genda was awarded the U.S. Legion of Merit by the American Air Force—seventeen years after he'd annihilated its planes in Hawaii.

Indeed, 1958 was a busy year for Kodama. Besides the difficulty of arranging the Lockheed sale, he was called upon to preserve the disintegrating political position of Prime Minister Kishi. Regarded by many as an American puppet for having pushed an unpopular Japanese-American Security Treaty through the Diet, Kishi appeared to be on the way out. Kodama, however, was able to save him, rallying the right wing to his standard and provoking street demonstrations in his behalf. Those demonstrations were countered by even larger ones organized by the Left, and it appeared that President Eisenhower's impending visit to Japan would result in widespread bloodshed. With the demonstrations gathering force, U.S. and Japanese authorities called upon Kodama to take charge of "Operation Protect Ike." Moving with customary quiet, Kodama pried loose an estimated \$2.3 million in "contributions" from local businessmen, ultranationalists, and racketeers. With that in hand, he hired platoons of anti-Communist street fighters, providing them with riot gear, trucks, and helicopters. At the last minute, however, Ike's visit was aborted as American authorities contemplated what appeared to be the makings of a massacre.

**S**OMETIME AFTER Operation Protect Ike, Kodama seems to have lent his support to the Reverend Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church, gravitating toward that

\* G-2 Report, 24 May 1947, Far East Command, marked to the attention of Col. R. E. Rudisill. The report was quietly declassified of late, and made a part of the records of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, International Prosecution Section (IMTFE-IPS), at the National Archives.

\*\* "Progress Report" re Yoshio Kodama and Ryoichi Sasagawa, July 7, 1948, IMTFE-IPS.

† Kodama, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-212.

†† *Ibid.*, pp. iii-iv.



organization through the auspices of Ryoichi Sasagawa. An old friend of Kodama's, a veteran of Sugamo and the Shanghai-Manchuria intrigues, Sasagawa came into enormous wealth after the war, becoming, among many other things, chairman of the Japan Shipbuilding Association. An ultranationalist whose views paralleled Kodama's, Sasagawa established himself in his friend's mold, becoming one of Japan's leading *kurumaku*.\* Just as Kodama financed private military exercises on the remote island of Choju, Sasagawa lavished money on Tokyo's "martial arts societies"—a euphemism that might cover everything from karate clubs to paramilitary cabals.

Sasagawa's pet project, however, was Win Over Communism (WOC), a fund-raising subsidiary of the Unification Church. Sasagawa served as WOC's chairman, and Kodama as its chief adviser. This needn't indicate any special religiosity on the part of either man; on the contrary, the Unification Church's evangelical anti-Communism is a bulwark of South Korean "stability" and, as such, protective of Kodama's investment in that country. The recipient of untold Lockheed millions, Kodama was the aircraft firm's agent in both Japan and Korea. Other corporations (notably Gulf) have been shaken down for "political contributions" by Korea's Park regime, the quid pro quo being the right to do business there. It's hard to believe that Kodama, with his influence and investments in South Korea, should not have provided Park's minions with support, financial and otherwise. If he did, then his affiliation with WOC is particularly suggestive. Specifically, it raises the possibility of the Lockheed Corporation's indirectly subsidizing the Moonies' spread from Seoul to Savannah. The money Lockheed sent to Japan was taken from Hong Kong by an apostate Spanish missionary for delivery in so-called Bekins boxes to the industry's *kurumaku* in Tokyo.

The Spanish-born priest was a naturalized Japanese citizen whose given name, Jose Gardeano, had been changed to Hoze Aramiya. Father Hoze was a courier for what Japanese police officials describe as an "underground bank." After Lockheed made an electronic transfer of funds from its Los Angeles offices to those of its Hong Kong foreign-exchange dealer, Deak & Company, Father Hoze or another secret courier then would take the money to Japan. The sums, in cash or yen bearer checks, were hand-carried aboard planes in flight bags and large attaché cases that held upward of 9,300 10,000-yen notes weighing about 27.5 pounds.\*\*

While Deak & Company served as middlemen in transfers amounting to \$8.3 million between 1969 and 1975, another \$4.3 million was sent by other routes, notably through Lockheed's Swiss branch. Receipts for this mon-

ey came in a variety of shapes and forms. Shig Katayama, an American, says he provided the aircraft firm with blank receipts signed by himself as proprietor of the I-D Corporation's Hong Kong office. The owner of Japan's largest coffee-vending-machine company, Katayama founded I-D in the Cayman Islands three years ago. Paid \$72,000 for his signatures, Katayama is a Los Angeles resident and, apparently, I-D Corp.'s only employee.

Other Lockheed receipts were even more obvious and, occasionally, bizarre:

"I received One Hundred Peanuts.  
s/Hiroshi Itoh"\*

Kodama's own hand written receipts looked like this:

"Amount Seventy Five Million Yen Only  
Have duly received the above  
Showa 47th Year Nov. 6 (1972)  
Kodama Yoshio"

In all, Lockheed remitted about 2.33 billion yen to its Tokyo office. Receipts issued by Kodama account for about 1.72 billion yen, while the remaining \$610 million appears to have gone to the Marubeni Corporation. This last amount (about \$1.66 million) is thought to have been paid to high government officials. Receipts issued by the I-D Corp. are nearly identical in their yen amounts to the Marubeni Corporation's receipts for "peanuts," "units," and "pieces." Obviously, then, the money paid by Lockheed to Marubeni necessitated two sets of receipts: the "agricultural set" issued by Marubeni for the internal purpose of keeping track of the payments; and the external set "issued" by Lockheed's Hong Kong front, the I-D Corp. The former were never meant to see daylight; the latter, however, could be used for accounting purposes. According to Katayama, this was the use of the receipts he provided. By insisting, however, that he never received any cash from Lockheed, he is at odds with Lockheed executives who claim that I-D receipts reflected money actually dispersed to Katayama. (Curiously, the amount in dispute—\$1.6 million—is equal to that represented by fourteen bearer checks that were said to have been stolen and which, so far, have not been recovered.) If Katayama is lying, it may be because he pocketed the money supposedly issued to him by Lockheed—or because he intends to protect his own financial interests in Japan by denying a direct involvement in illegal payoff. If, however, Katayama is telling the truth, and never received money Lockheed says it paid to him, then \$1.6 million has disappeared entirely. Almost anyone could have it. I-D, therefore, seems never to have handled any cash: the 2.33 billion yen remitted by Lockheed is accounted for by adding Kodama's receipts to those of Marubeni. The amounts balance.

\* Literally, "black curtain": a term from the Kabuki drama which refers to someone who works "behind the scenes."

\*\* The statistic, unearthed by Tokyo's *Asahi Shimbun*, is not as academic as it may seem: it explains why it is that the receipts Kodama issued to Lockheed never exceeded 93 million yen. Unlike others, who were sometimes paid off in yen bearer checks, Kodama always insisted on cash. This, then, represents the largest amount that could be discreetly carried aboard a commercial aircraft.

\* Receipt dated August 9, 1973. Itoh was the Executive Director of the Marubeni Corporation, the gigantic trading company that formerly represented Lockheed in Japan. The "one hundred peanuts" referred to a transfer of 100 million yen. After the receipt became public, the Crown Record Company of Japan sought to cash in on its notoriety, cutting "Bokumo Hoshiina Peanuts," or "I Also Want Peanuts"; the rock tune, however, never really got off the ground.



The purpose of these circumlocutions, however, is clear. Because the money was to be used in illicit lobbying operations, Lockheed did not want its remittance route traced. Neither did the firm's agents. The receipts, therefore, served three purposes: they disguised the remittance route; gave Lockheed a hold on its agents; and provided the firm with a means of justifying what it liked to call its "marketing expenses."

The ultimate goal, of course, was to sell airplanes, and in this Lockheed was successful. After years of behind-the-scenes puppeteering, involving relatively small remittances, Lockheed's patience was rewarded. On September 1, 1972, President Nixon, accompanied by Secretary of State William Rogers and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger, met in Hawaii with Japanese Prime Minister Takuei Tanaka. As part of a U.S.-Japan trade agreement, the Japanese agreed to purchase at least \$320 million in civilian aircraft from an American manufacturer within the next two years.

Within a few days, however, the Japanese Defense Council retracted its previous decision to produce anti-submarine patrol planes domestically—thereby making possible a billion-dollar sale of Lockheed P-3C Orions to Japan. A few days before that decision was formally approved, Father Hoze and his Hong Kong carriers went to work. Before a month was out, exactly 1 billion yen was delivered to Kodama in small wooden packing crates that required fifteen separate deliveries.\* The last payment took place on the day Americans went to the polls to reelect Richard Nixon.

While this financial blizzard was under way, All-Nippon Airlines cancelled its option to buy ten DC-10s from McDonnell Douglas Corporation. Two weeks later, Tanaka met with ANA executives who, shortly thereafter, announced that the firm would purchase six Lockheed Tristars, later upped to twenty-one, at a cost of \$20 million apiece. The man responsible for ANA's decision is believed to have been Kenji Osano, one of the firm's directors and its largest stockholder. A confidant of Tanaka, Osano is also the owner of the hotel in which the Nixon-Tanaka talks were held.

## EPILOGUE

**T**HERE IS NO PROOF that Lockheed was specifically discussed during the Nixon-Tanaka summit talks. And yet, it would be careless not to speculate about the mat-

\* At the official exchange rate, this would be about \$2.7 million; on the black market, however, a billion yen would amount to exactly \$2.5 million. Whatever the amount, the deliveries required that the courier have a strong right arm; if the *Asahi Shimbun* is correct, the money weighed 412 pounds.

ter. Certainly the Japanese have done so. In the aftermath of the subcommittee hearings, three ANA executives have been arrested and former Prime Minister Tanaka has been jailed. No fewer than twenty Japanese industrialists and government officials have been placed under investigation.

As for Nixon, his involvement with the Lockheed Corporation is deservedly suspect. Investigators for the defunct Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations have told me, "It's absolutely incredible that Lockheed should have been the only U.S. corporation of any size *not* to have made a contribution to Nixon's 1972 reelection campaign—and yet, that's what we're told. It just doesn't make sense, not after what he did for them. I mean, he intervened *personally* to get that loan." The absence of a Lockheed contribution to the Nixon campaign is intriguing. So is Nixon's association with Khashoggi, and his appointment of senior Lockheed executives to important Air Force and ambassadorial posts. Equally suggestive is the proximity of the summit talks. So is the proximity of the summit talks to the Kodama payments, the decision against Japan's domestic production of patrol planes, and ANA's choice of the Tristar. Moreover, Nixon had himself visited Japan on a number of occasions between 1963 and 1968, conferring with business leaders and politicians there on behalf of Mudge Rose, the New York law firm in which he was then a partner. Asked if Nixon or the firm represented Lockheed during that time, Mudge Rose has so far declined to answer.

Whether or not Nixon's relationship to Lockheed becomes a subject of future investigation, the more important question of the multinationals' often subversive influence must continue to be examined. While the firms insist that their global operations make them subject to the laws of many nations (rather than to those of a single one), the truth is, as we've seen, otherwise. With the buffers provided by Swiss banks, Panamanian "research foundations," and batteries of attorneys, bagmen, cut-outs, and spies, the multinationals are often able to pick which laws they will obey, which levies shall apply. In this sense, then, the United Nations is correct in terming them *transnationals*. While not quite sovereign states, they function as protected principalities, enjoying their status as "instruments of foreign policy." In reality, however, such policies tend increasingly to be instruments of the multinationals.

The Lockheed documents and the testimony of the firm's executives suggest an internal logic, an inevitability, to the practices which evolved. Alluding to them, Daniel Haughton told newsmen in Washington, "I haven't done anything wrong as corporate chairman. We did it playing the rules of the game. . . . I went out and increased profits and sales for shareholders and employees. If they want to change the rules of the game now, let them."

It seems a good idea, however difficult it might be to accomplish. To abide with the multinationals' immunities, out of apathy or cynicism, is a surrender to the calculus of greed. Accomplishing that surrender, we ensure the subordination of democratic processes to the mechanisms of multinational profiteering. And that can only deliver us to a final bankruptcy of another kind and even greater magnitude. □



# Picking the right airline starts to matter after the first 3,000 miles.

Nobody agonizes over the choice of airlines. It's not one of life's momentous decisions.

However (there's always a however), when you're traveling outside the U.S., flying to distant continents, you're going to spend more than a few hours on an airline.

And that's when it makes sense to spend some time thinking about airlines.

And thinking about Pan Am specifically.

For one, there are parts of the world to which only Pan Am flies non-stop. (Tokyo from Los Angeles and New York, and Auckland from

San Francisco\* on the new 747 SP.) Thereby cutting a couple of hours off your trip.

For another, nobody can fly you direct to as many places in the world from the U.S. as Pan Am. (Direct means no change of planes. And everyone knows what that means to a traveler.)

For another, no other international airline has as extensive and sophisticated a reservation system as Pan Am's Panamac® II.

For still another, Pan Am's in-flight features can make your time in flight seem even shorter. (Multi-lingual flight attendants, a choice of movies, a big choice of entrees. On many of our 747s a choice for first class passengers of either dining at your seat or at a table in our upper-deck dining room. The biggest fleet of 747s to give you room to stretch out and a group of people experienced at helping travelers all over the world.)

In the end, picking Pan Am may not be the biggest decision you ever make. But it may be the best.



\*Starting December 6, 1976.

See your travel agent.



## A

**abdolatriy** *n*, fashionable irreverence  
**andelian** *adj*, capable of negotiating high places  
**anphelopsis** *n*, total ennui, lack of interest  
**aristotropic** *adj*, tending toward things aristocratic—much in the way a heliotropic plant tends toward the sun  
**arvine** *adj*, dweller of the fields, *eg.*, field mouse, “the arvine creature, ran hither and yon”  
**autotoll** *n*, toll bridge—exact change line

## B

**befrought** *adj*, overwhelmed mentally  
**blastworker** *n*, one who works with explosives, *i.e.*, nitro, dynamite, TNT, etc.  
**bois de dard** *n*, F, wood of the dart—open to interpretation  
**bombane** *v*, to hurl invective and contumely

## C

**carboil** *n*, the solidified oil and grease bubbles which adorn the underside of a car  
**casselanaire** *n*, pipe dream, fanciful creation  
**cerenibrium** *n*, narcotized tranquillity  
**copulescence** *n*, the healthy afterglow which attends successful intercourse  
**cuptone** *n*, the sound made by cupping the hand over the ear

## D

**darkling** *n*, one who is depressed or chronically melancholy  
**dipsonate** *v*, to force alcoholic beverages on another person  
**dort** *n*, small object of scorn and derision  
**drisme** *adj*, weather which is both dreary and wet (rainy)

## E

**eggplantine** *adj*, having the color or shape of an eggplant  
**enfemic** *adj*, peculiar to women  
**ergroid** *adj*, crude, devoid of politesse  
**exarbitrator** *n*, sophist  
**exorcyst** *n*, one who engages in elaborate ritual to remove sebaceous carbuncles

## Addenda to the dictionary

# A VOLLEY

DESPITE THE RICHNESS of the American language, there are occasional gaps, places where, for lack of an exact word, several must do. Though new words are constantly filtering into the language from diverse sources, few persons, to my knowledge, are intentionally and professionally creating them.

I am one of those persons and am considered in the trade, along with Ambrose Bierce, a master lexicraftologist. Unfortunately, poor Ambrose passed away some years ago, so I am alone in the field. Many of the examples included here have been culled from my early writ-

## F

**fandible** *n*, dance move in which fan dancer flourishes fan  
**fasole** *v*, to physically calm or restrain  
**floit** *v*, flaunt sexually  
**forque** *v*, to gouge or spear with a poisonous instrument  
**free-lantic** *adj*, of or pertaining to free-lance work

## G

**gnord** *n*, large chasm  
**gorcon** *n*, mythological animal with head of a frog and body of a duck  
**gorcozoid** *adj*, of or pertaining to a gorcon  
**graphoon** *n*, verbal cartoon, vignette—see LITON

## H

**harveylike** *adj*, similar in appearance to Harvey  
**hopsole** *n*, the anterior or ventral fin of the gefilte fiish  
**horndite** *n*, esoteric sexual allusion *eg.*, the article was replete with obscurantist references and horndite  
**hyponious** *adj*, given to flights of imagination, fanciful

## I

**iiant** *n*, giant pygmy native to the

Lesser Antilles; because of his unusual size, the iiant is usually indistinguishable from anyone else

**insorcible** *adj*, magically intractable

**iracent** *adj*, glowing with anger

## J

**josan** *n*, the fourth primary color, the others being red, yellow, and blue

## K

**kapula** *n*, in grammar, the reticulated participle, when juxtaposed transitively with a split infinitive  
**kikidoori** *n*, a pearl-like growth occasionally uncovered during root-canal surgery  
**klonce** *n*, crotch

## L

**lapant** *n*, lasciviously hungry individual. Sufferer from satyriasis or nymphomania  
**lasarene** *n*, cold, one who is hyperborean in temperament  
**licid** *adj*, thin quality of a liquid—opposite of viscous  
**litoon** *n*, humorous vignette—see GRAPHOON  
**lolodacity** *n*, campaign strategy in which politicians hit



Lewis Burke Frumkes

# OF WORDS

ings, which may account for their relative unfamiliarity.

My interest in lexicraftology derives chiefly from an ancestor, twenty generations removed, who first created the article *the*. Some say he would be justly proud of me, were he still around, and that I am his "*bois de dard*," but they may be exaggerating my accomplishments.

In any event, it is my hope that the reader will not only be illumined by the words here presented, but will feel obligated to adapt them to his own style and needs.

far below the belt

## M

**malactive** *adj*, evilly busy, up to no good, *e.g.*, the malactive Mrs. Mintz

**mondeveneer** *n*, a false worldliness, *e.g.*, the count assumed a mondeveneer

**monodigital** *adj*, involving the action of one finger, *e.g.*, he was a monodigital typist

**myhx** *n*, the premature blond streak often seen running through the hair of young women

## N

**nacilious** *adj*, of or pertaining to an adult who uses baby talk

**nocturanian** *n*, 1) that genus of raccoon which is both nocturnal and garbage-eating, 2) any creature of the evening

**nonono** *adv*, extreme form of the negative; no!

**nudements** *n*, rules of pornography

## O

**obstilibut** *n*, that end of a syringe which points away from the face

**orealaby** *n*, a syllabus or compendium of humorous writing

**osantine** *adj*, of or pertaining to oozing

**ossis** *n*, the contents of a black hole

## P

**pantonomic** *adj*, pertaining to the act of patting a friend on the derriere, as among football players

**phallander** *n*, a rare species of salamander, characterized, as is the fiddler crab, by one outsized member

**popsynopsis** *n*, exceedingly short summary

**porcule** *adj*, round of face

**psintoid** *adj*, pertaining to tongue twisters

## Q

**quatressential** *adj*, not quite quintessential

**quorbus** *n*, a carnivorous plant once found in parts of New Guinea and believed to consume virgins; when brought to civilization, it rapidly became extinct

## R

**rackle** *v*, to grate on one's nerves

**ramiform** *n*, as Webster defines *ramiform* as resembling a branch, few people are aware that Ramiform I was also pharaoh of Egypt, 451-450 B.C. He is not much discussed in history books, having ended his life by butting his head into a pyramid, causing great

embarrassment to the Egyptians of the time. Thus, while his name has been carefully deleted from most histories, the word *ramiform* has come to mean the manner of ending one's life by butting one's head. There was no Ramiform II

**resofincular** *adj*, resembling a wire hanger

**rhapsorinth** *n*, the ten tasks which must be performed before becoming a member of the Eleusinian Mysteries

## S

**salimony** *n*, state of embarrassed poverty

**simplectic** *adj*, so simple as to be absurd

**stargle** *v*, to choke, making gurgling noises

## T

**tandrome** *n*, portable elephant house

**tanteloupe** *n*, sorcerer's cap

**testiferous** *adj*, uppity, agitated

**trigatory** *adj*, an arrangement of three, *e.g.*, he entered into a trigatory relationship

## U

**ulanimity** *n*, complete satiety, contentment

**umdrill** *n*, state of bewilderment, darkness

## V

**vistant** *adj*, within visible range

**vixative** *adj*, pertaining to undisciplined study habits

## W

**wam poles** *n*, pl., the vertical sticks used in constructing a teepee or tent

**wendigant** *adj*, wayward, stray

**wystemious** *adj*, given to circumlocution and double-talk

## X

**xenoralia** *n*, foreign idioms and expressions

## Y

**yost** *v*, to lift an extremely heavy object, to strain

**yukatory** *adj*, relating to things vulgar or disgusting

## Z

**zonoobia** *n*, fantasy state, deep reverie



# MURIDAE

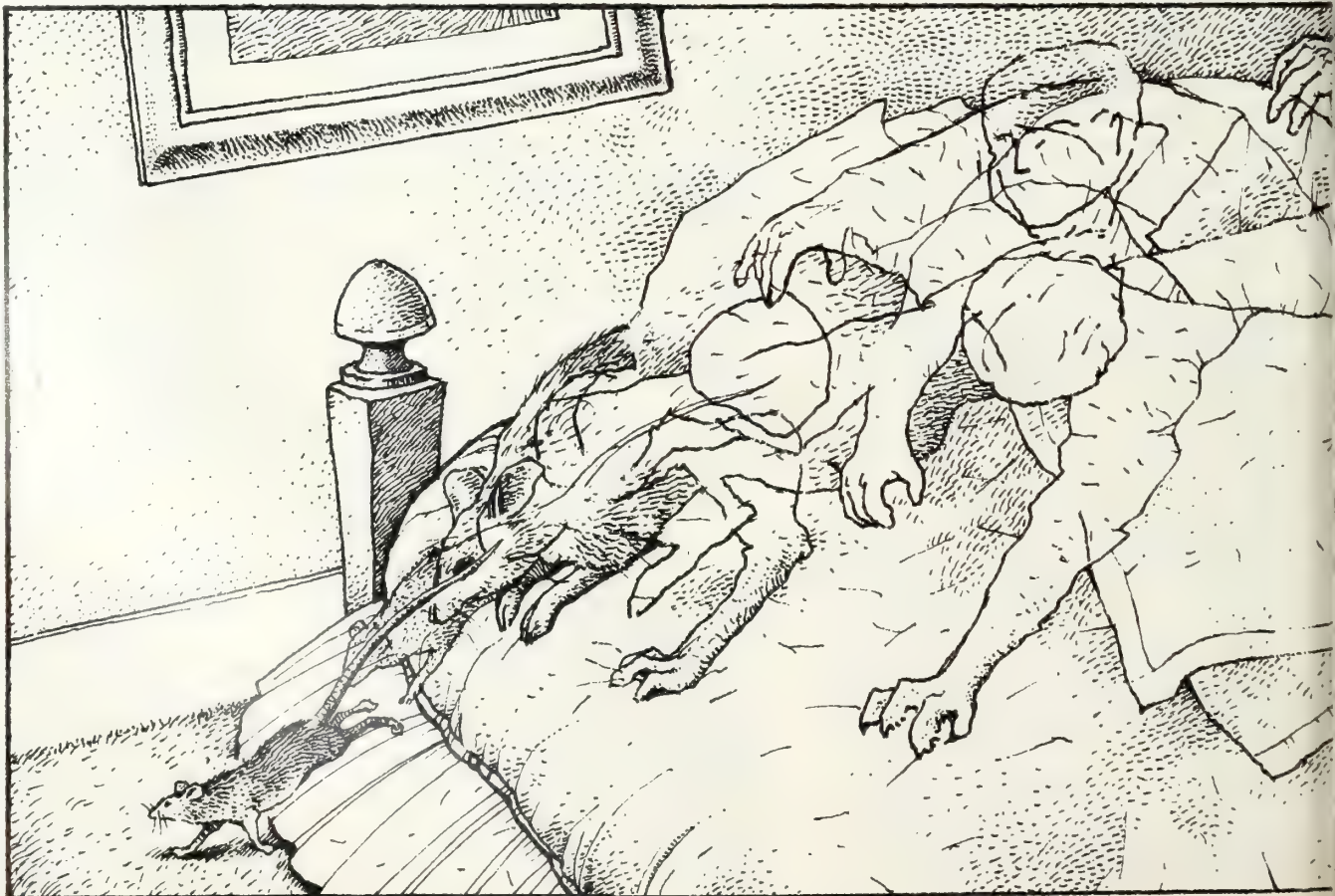
**A**S PAUL, COMING HOME from work, entered his large apartment in the East Eighties, he once again felt the vague hostility in the air. That meant everyone was home. It was deathly quiet. That meant everyone was meditating. Gone was the happy cocktail hour when Marian and the girls would gather around him to hear how his day had gone. Now he was expected to go into his study and meditate too. But he was damned if he would today. He went into the living room and poured himself a drink.

If he wished, he, too, could sit down and close his eyes—and get into that state where gray phosphorescence boiled up behind his eyelids—but he didn't feel like it. Besides, despite having paid \$150 for it, he disliked his mantra. He had never dared tell anyone this—certainly not Marian and the girls, who claimed to have acquired great relaxation and spiritual insight from meditating. They would tell him his mantra was merely an aid to concentration, just some meaningless syllables.

But his *did* mean something...the name of a Japanese beer he had drunk quarts of during the Occupation. In any case, although meditating seemed to do Marian and the girls good—they said it made them more efficient—it seemed to put him in a state of dull acquiescence.

Drink in hand, he went over to the window and gazed down below at the park. Dull acquiescence. The tips of the trees were just turning green. It brought back to him a vision of several years ago when the girls were little and they would all go bicycling as a family Sunday mornings in Central Park...the girls in their matching red plaid trousers, white pullovers, long chestnut hair flying in the spring wind, and Marian, a handsome woman, with her good legs, athletic, always younger than her years, and Paul himself, serenely smiling—he was certain he would have been smiling—a big man astride his English bike, in his sweat shirt, shorts, gym socks, and sneakers—his chestnut hair just the right length between swinger and family man. They must

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A story by M. Cameron Grey

have been just what the mayor had in mind when he declared New York Fun City.

The trouble was, Paul thought, they were such an easy target for *all* the bright ideas that came along. They seemed to have gone from togetherness to nuclear family with no element of choice. The setting seemed to have changed around them. Now, when the five of them tried to do anything together, it felt like moving a lot of lumber about in a very small room.

Well, growing up was hard for the girls, and growing older was hard on Marian. She was conscientious, educated, energetic, outgoing—had brought all these qualities to motherhood, and then suddenly the girls, though beautiful, were big, sullen, private.

Until recently. Now women's liberation had

brought them together, and *he* was the patsy. It was difficult to learn exactly what he had done wrong; he had been under the impression he had always let Marian do precisely what she wanted to do. But often now it seemed as if the mere sight of him enraged them. His success as a lawyer was suspect, the money, food, clothes, education he gave them were suspect, and, most baffling of all, the love he felt for them was suspect. As a liberal lawyer he had willingly helped Marian with her various crusades, had commiserated with the girls over the injustices they experienced as women—they could be crane operators if they wanted to—but still, evidently, he stood accused by the mere fact of being a man, husband and father.

**"Lovely, big, beautiful girls, they sat there, like herd animals sniffing the wind, waiting for him to say something oppressive to them."**

**M**ARIAN INTERRUPTED his thoughts by coming into the living room, fresh as a daisy from her meditation. From the way she kissed him he realized they would have sex later.



Martín Aviléz



Marian believed in lots of sex. So did he, really, although recently the prospect tired him more than it delighted him. Marian had read several new books on the importance of the clitoris, and this had changed their lovemaking. She had come to the conclusion that many of her thitherto orgasms had been "accidental"—and why leave pleasure up to accident? Well, he was no one to interfere with another's pleasure. Marian could have what she wanted. Still, he felt at the mercy of yet another idea. Pursued to its logical conclusion, it seemed to imply that the penis was on its way out.

He caught a glance of their embrace in the mirror. They looked so romantic. He supposed he could find a lot of women left who didn't believe in women's liberation. But he didn't want them. Didn't want the deception in his marriage, didn't want some woman *pretending* he was great, didn't want a woman limited enough to *believe* he was great. He wanted Marian—the way she used to be.

Dinner was a casserole Marian had put together after coming home from her work for the ERA. The girls served, with the understanding that it was his turn to do the dishes afterwards. Well, he didn't mind that. Scraping them and putting them in the machine was a change after a day in the courts of law.

Over coffee, he covertly surveyed his lumber. At times his tennis friends would ask him, "How do you take it, surrounded by women all the time?" They would try to commiserate with him for having no sons. But Paul would laugh. He had been raised in a houseful of boys—his mother worn out at forty by his father and all their wild male demands. He had had enough of that. Looking at Marian and Hilary and Barbara and Robin, he realized all over again that he was crazy about them. Apparently he loved women—everything about them delighted him. He even loved the bathrooms cluttered with flowery lotions, shampoos, perfumes, and now New Freedom Mini-pads. And he was a fool for Marian's perfect breasts and thighs—and all the lovely hollows and roundnesses of the female body. He had adored watching his little girls develop into young women, filling out the jeans, ballooning the Indian shirts....

They seemed impatient to get back to whatever they were doing before dinner, but still he lingered, wanting to have a real conversation with them. Lovely, big, beautiful girls, they sat there, like herd animals sniffing the wind, waiting for him to say something oppressive to them. He had learned not to say, "How was school?" That was putting them down for still being in school while he was

out in the real world. He could not ask them about boyfriends—that was treating them like sex objects. He *could* ask them how they felt—but that often released such a torrent of self-analysis on how it felt to be a woman, dependent on men for everything from money to behavior, that he had to be feeling particularly strong. More and more he was finding it easier to be silent.

"What's the matter, Paul?" Marian said.

"Nothing."

"Hard day at the orifice?" Hilary asked. She could achieve quite an ironic tone for a fifteen-year-old. No doubt his fleeting impulse to belt her one—into niceness—was a recalcitrant streak of chauvinism left in him.

Barbara and Robin watched him. Test case. But he was tired.

"No . . . not really . . ."

**T**HE CASSEROLE SAT in his stomach like lead. When he had put the dishes in the machine he went to his study and worked on a brief until Marian came in and nuzzled his earlobe. After their lovemaking, he lay beside her, sleepless. She had immediately dropped off with a happy little sigh. He tried to think about his life, to pull it together somehow, to define it—it seemed to be slipping away from him—but all he could think of was, "The salt has lost its savor." He tried rhyming savor . . . save her . . . shave her . . . He had another big day tomorrow, a tricky case, and here he was, tense and thoroughly depressed. He'd used up the last of the sleeping pills.

Although it was against instructions, he thought of meditating to get to sleep.

Well. Why not?

He settled himself, closed his eyes, and began to repeat his mantra. . . .

Japanese beer . . .

Japanese beer . . .

Although the gray phosphorescence promised to foam up soon, the thought of Japanese beer immediately called forth his drearier memories of the Army. He opened his eyes.

Dammit, why couldn't he have been given a decent mantra like everyone else? Something Indian and mystical. He thought of various Indian names. Bhagavadgita . . . too long . . . Kali . . . no . . . Shiva? . . . Shiva had a nice sound. . . .

He closed his eyes again.

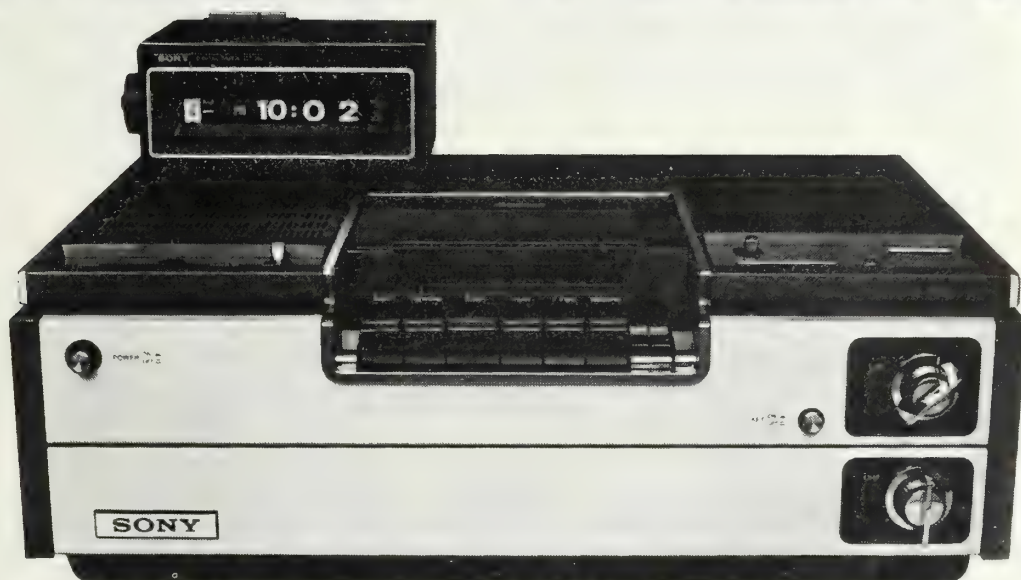
Shiva . . .

Shiva . . .

It seemed to work very well. Better, in fact. The gray foam was developing a slight golden tinge around the edges, and he could feel him-



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*Sony's Betamax Video-tape deck. It lets you see shows you would have missed.*

You're looking at Betamax, a revolutionary new product from Sony that plugs into any TV and enables you to see programs you would have otherwise missed.

We'll explain.

First off, let's take a situation where there are two shows on opposite each other and you'd like to watch both of them. Well, believe it or not, now you can. Because Sony's Betamax deck can actually videotape something off one channel while you're watching another channel. Then, when you're finished watching one show, all you do is push some buttons and you can play back a tape of the show that you would have missed.



TV Picture Simulated

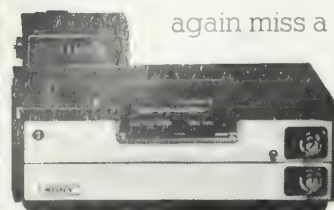
Pretty incredible, huh? Well, listen to something else Betamax does that's equally incredible.

Let's say you have to go somewhere, or do something, at a time when there's something on TV you want to see. Well, Sony's Betamax is equipped with a timer that can be set to automatically videotape that program while you're not there. Then, whenever you want, you just play back the tape—and again you see what you would have missed.

(Our one-hour tapes, by the way, are reusable—just record over them and use them over and over again.)

Imagine. With Sony's Betamax, you'll never again miss a program you want to see.

Ah, progress!



*Betamax plugs into any TV, even if it's not a Sony (though you'll be missing a lot if it's not).*

**BETAMAX®**  
**"IT'S A SONY.®"**



self drifting away, his body becoming weightless, his mind nicely blank . . . until suddenly, with no effort at all, he was a baby mouse on the pillow. He was hairless, a bit chilled, with his eyes only half open, curled on the pillow beside Marian's. He stretched and could dimly see his little pink feet splayed out in front of him. Strangely, he was filled with a tremendous health, and a high note of excitement vibrated in the air around him. Although he felt totally a baby mouse—he could even taste the mother's milk left in his mouth—he could still think, and he thought, profoundly, "So I've finally got it together." He yawned—a delicious drowsiness came over him—and he plunged into a deep infant sleep.

At the breakfast table, he was abstracted.

"What's the matter, Paul?"

"Nothing."

But he was saying "Nothing" too much these days, so he made the effort. "I dreamt I was a baby mouse last night."

This produced unwonted hilarity.

"Oh, *daddy*," Barbara said.

Marian smiled at him. "Did you enjoy it?"

"As a matter of fact, I did."

"Classic," Hilary said. "Just classic."

"What is?"

"Dreams of little animals almost always mean you are dreaming of genitals."

**B**UT IN THE TAXI going to his office he was certain he had not dreamt of genitals. He knew a sex dream when he had one. This was something else. The experience of being a baby mouse kept piercing him with its vividness—the flood of well-being, the perfection of his little body functioning away at a deliriously high metabolic rate . . . but, above all, the clarity and at-oneness of his mind—it was a *spiritual* dream. He wished he knew what it meant. The peace of it brimmed over into his day . . . a heady combination of peace and excitement. . . . He could hardly wait to meditate again with his new mantra. He went through the day with his usual efficiency, even through two trial cases in the morning—although, in the middle of cross-examining one witness, he was suddenly struck by how unimportant the case was, how unimportant it *all* was, and he paused between questions, gazing for a long time beyond the witness. His fugue may have been interpreted by the jury as cold disbelief, he realized, returning to his office, and may have contributed to his winning the case.

That evening he went with Marian to an all-woman concert at Lincoln Center, and although part of him registered the heavy tones

of Bartók, the sight of womanly thighs encasing cellos, he was restless and impatient.

The girls were in bed when they returned, and fortunately Marian was tired and went to sleep immediately. Free, he settled himself and closed his eyes.

Shiva . . .

Shiva . . .

Sheeevah . . . the familiar phosphorescence began to play beneath his eyelids, although this time it filled his whole head and was shot with streaks of golden light. . . . Almost immediately he was a mouse again. This time with hair and whiskers. He was crouching on the pillow in an attitude of intense alertness. Marian loomed huge and white beside him. He was no longer an infant—the peace of infancy had been replaced by a tremendous exhilaration. His heart was thudding in his young chest—he realized he was now an adolescent mouse. Marian smelled very old and he felt very new, the hair on his body silky, his pink feet translucent. He brought up his back leg and stroked a large velvet ear, passing his back foot down over his face to trace the ends of his vibrating whiskers. Hesitantly he stepped out on the pillowcase, feeling the harsh weave of the muslin under his feet. He would have laughed, but now found that he could not laugh, that he did not need to laugh—his whole body was laughter. The Paul in him said, "I suppose I should pull myself together," which made no sense: he had never *been* so together. He felt a violent desire to run and scampered in circles around the pillowcase. It was fun, but not completely satisfying. He had an urge to do much more, and realized he was now three-dimensional.

Magically, he descended the bed leg and crossed the parquet floor. Everything, the chair legs, his giant shoes and socks, was bathed in a luminosity which seemed to pour out of his own eyes, which he could feel large and dark in his head. He set off down the hall, with the intention of going to see the girls sleeping in their beds, but was detoured by the powerful smell of peanuts in the silver dish in the living room. Crouching between the silver cigarette lighter and silver framed photographs of the girls, he gorged himself on one. It was marvelous being able to eat and laugh at the same time. With his belly suddenly round, he crawled down the coffee-table leg and pushed his way through the nap of the living-room rug—then found he could jump, which he did, in long bounds down the hall to Hilary's room. He realized he was looking for someone to play with. But she was too huge and white and had faintly the smell of Marian. Barbara, in the next bed, was not much better.





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He scuttered into Robin's room, and with Robin, who was only twelve, he felt a certain kinship. Crouching on the paunch of her big teddy bear which she still kept beside her pillow, he gazed into her large expanse of face. There was no joy there, but about the corners of the enormous mouth there was still the softness and vulnerability of youth.

The sight sobered him. Through his joy he felt a fatherly pang of worry for her. Immediately a frightening sense of dissolution ran through his bones. Some terrible threat hung over him. Heart pounding, whiskers rigid, he dragged himself back to his bed, defecating the peanut on the way.

With his last strength he climbed the bed leg. No sooner had he attained the pillowcase than he was Paul again. He was breathing heavily, bewildered...yet left with a shimmering memory of delight....

"Another terrific dream," he thought, and fell into a deep sleep.

**I**T WAS HARD TO WAKE UP in the morning. He heard the alarm from a great distance, and then Marian was joggling him, shaking his shoulder.

"Paul? Come *on*, Paul, you'll be late."

He put his feet down on the floor and dragged himself up to a sitting position, holding his head in his hands.

"Wow," he said.

"You look like you'd been out on the town last night. What's the matter, Paul? Didn't you sleep well?"

"I..." his rapturous cavortings of the night filled him with wonder. "I..." He even drew a hand across his lips to feel the long whiskers, tentatively touched his fingers to his ear.

Then the human hairs on the back of his neck rose. He stared at the parquet floor, where, beside his bare feet, rested, undeniably, several little mouse droppings.

Paul did not go to his club for lunch. Instead, he walked over to Bryant Park and sat there under the trees, a reasonable man in a turmoil of confusion. The only thing he could remotely equate his feelings to was being in love. Not as it was with Marian. This was some wild, absolutely forbidden love which he had never experienced. But who, what was he in love *with*? Being a mouse? The incredibility of it came at him in waves. Still, last night was no dream. He had *become* a young mouse, and the intense reality of it still shook him to his cordovan shoes. Not for a moment did he feel he was sick or going crazy. It was very simple. Through his unorthodox meditation, he had stumbled on some-

thing absolutely marvelous. Although he was not a religious man, he even wondered if he might not have stumbled on his own reincarnation, or someone else's. Whatever it was, with all the powerful, perverse *willfulness* of love, it was *all* he wanted.

He sat on the stone bench and stared with growing disbelief at the gravel at his feet. Disbelief in the gravel.

He stood up abruptly. But what if he couldn't get *back* from being a mouse? That wouldn't be so funny. What of Marian and the girls, his career, his life? Obviously he was playing around with something extremely dangerous. Yes, whatever it was had all the terror and irresistible appeal of a secret, suddenly realized vice.

This sensible line of thought made him abruptly desolate. The gray consciousness of his manhood came over him like a shroud. He *was* nuts. Or he was tired—perhaps having male menopause...it was a bad time for all of them. It wasn't easy to be a middle-aged woman these days, or a teen-ager, with everything falling apart, roles confused, values questioned.... He walked on down Fifth Avenue. Waiting for the green light at Thirtieth Street, he thought of Robin's sleeping face, and of his fatherly pang of protectiveness—even as he had sat watching her in his happy young mousedom....

The light changed, he stepped off—and suddenly he stood stock-still while traffic blared at him.

*That* was it! *Worry* turned him back into a man! How simple! Meditation turned him into a mouse; worry into a man. He *could* have control.

With an incredible lightness of heart, he hurried back to the office and dictated twenty-seven letters while waiting for nighttime.

**M**ARIAN WANTED TO READ in bed, and she took an unconscionable amount of time falling asleep over her book. He held a book in his hands too. When he was sure she was really under, he took her book and placed it on her bedside table, removed her glasses, and turned out the light. He kissed the back of her neck. "Goodnight," he whispered.

Then,

Shiva... Shiva... Shee... vah... the phosphorescence before his eyes was all golden now, it billowed up and poured around him until, with breathtaking abruptness, he found himself sitting up on his hind legs on the pillow. He was immediately aware of the tremendous depth and breadth of his chest, the



power of his legs; the hair on his body had become thicker and was sticking straight out, electrified by the huge, close, repellent presence of Marian. He scampered down the bed leg away from her. He was brought up short in the hallway, compelled to lick his fur all over, which he could do with lightning rapidity; it became sleek and shining in the light from the bathroom.

Then he could take stock. If infancy was peace, and adolescence ecstasy, *this* was compounded of the two—as well as something else, august and thrilling. He was perfect. Everything about him was elegant, thrusting, sinuous, sure. All of his senses were at an extraordinary pitch. He took a step forward and found he had huge balls between his hind legs. They were heavy, magical, like furnaces that propelled him forward. He had so many hick, possible desires he didn't know which to fulfill first, but he loped down the hall to the bathroom and took a long, excruciatingly sweet drink of water from a puddle in the shower. Then he scudded along to the kitchen, where he paused on one of the black squares of the checkered linoleum floor. A cracker crumb fitted like a boulder in his paws. He was attacking it with powerful rodent teeth when suddenly on the white square next to him a shape materialized—a shape surrounded by a pungent, infuriating odor. He instantly recognized it as one of his own kind—and went into his fighting stance—legs spread, feet played out, tail in the air. Stiff-legged, he curled his body at his opponent, a battle shriek was torn from his throat, he heard the snap of teeth in his ears and the breath of his opponent come out with a startled thud. He curled himself again. He could feel he was fighting a bigger, heavier body, but it made no difference—he had the advantage of total conviction: he was suddenly in a thrilling paroxysm of rage. The glands under his tail spurted an even more pungent odor. Then the body abruptly gave, and retreated. He chased it, nipping at its haunches, to behind the stove, where it became snakelike and oozed down a small hole.

Breathing heavily, he returned to his black square under the kitchen table. He was beside himself with victory and righteous anger.

The son of a bitch! Encroaching on his territory! He never knew there were mice in the apartment. After all he paid for maintenance every month! He'd have to tell the super to call the pest-control people . . .

Too late! Too late he realized he had slipped into worrying like a man. He sat up on his hind legs—but gray foam swirled around him, his bones dissolved, and he received a terrific

crack on the head from the underside of the kitchen table.

Marian, roused by the noise, found him sprawled, dazed, on the kitchen floor.

"What on *earth*, Paul!"

Somewhere he found the words. "I was just getting myself a snack," he said. "A midnight snack."

"Under the kitchen table?" She stood there in her nightgown, for once truly baffled.

"I must have slipped," he said. "On a crumb."

"Oh, for heaven's sake, come back to bed," Marian said.

He got into bed beside her and feigned sleep. Actually, he lay there in a haze of happiness, with totally justified, purifying adrenaline coursing through his veins. He had never known the bliss of rage without guilt before. When he did drop off, it was into the fine, mellow sleep of the just.

**T**HE NEXT DAY Paul felt certain that with one more mousetime he could have complete control of the situation. Last night's debacle he put down to inexperience. He had gotten carried away. Certainly now that he knew the results, he could control when he would worry or not.

He foresaw a marvelous life ahead of him . . . his days as a man, a *good* man, carrying out his duties to his career, and as a husband and father—and his nights, ah, his nights! The joy of them dominated his day. Instead of feeling trapped, he felt he was going somewhere, toward a rich, if unknown fulfillment. Over the lunch table at the club, he looked at the other men with pity, and thought of Marian and the girls with tenderness. Poor darlings, casting about in confusion . . .

It was his tennis night at the Armory, and he served powerful line serves, one after the other, following up with smashing net attacks. But, compared to his fight of the night before, his flesh felt sluggish and heavy on his bones, ridiculous sweat poured down over his eyes, and his attention, even at tennis, seemed splintered, thready, pierced by a hundred other useless concerns.

In the locker room, as they were showering, his partner said, "Boy, you were hot tonight. What are you taking these days, Paul? Geritol?"

He laughed, but the subject of age brought a worry to the edge of his mind.

In the taxi, alone, he gazed out of the window as the park unrolled past him. There was something disturbing about his recent nights that he was not facing. . .

**"He approached the opening, and odors rich and splendid with promise wrapped around him. To his helpless delight he heard strange, far-off singing."**



Home, he helped Robin with her algebra—a delicate task, since there was always the undercurrent that he was condescending to her female mind. Actually, he could barely keep up with her. Under the lamplight of the dining-room table, beside Robin, he tried to figure out what  $x$  was. It was a problem in proportions:

$$\frac{50}{x} : \frac{25}{1} :: \frac{8}{x^2} : x. \dots$$

He stared at the figures, then looked up beyond Robin. . . . He was forty-five; if, say, thirty years was the potential time left to him—he rapidly multiplied 75 by 365, calculating his number of days—then, three nights were to  $x$  = the life span of a mouse . . . .

He felt a chill along his spine. Something was badly wrong with the proportions! His time as a mouse was being crazily speeded up. He had no idea what the life span of a mouse was, but . . .

"Daddy," Robin was saying. "If it bores you so much you don't *have* to help me."

"What? No," he said, "It doesn't bore me. It doesn't bore me at all."

**A**T NIGHT, IN BED beside Marian, as he listened to her falling asleep, he found he was trembling. He feared what he was going to find when he meditated, and he did not want to face it. He lay there, summoning his courage. Marian had forgotten to draw the curtains, and moonlight was coming through the window and spilling on the floor. He took a deep breath and closed his eyes.

"Shiva," he whispered.

The phosphorescence was all golden now, cumulus clouds of it, and he heard a high quivering note, as if his trembling had been transformed into music. It broke off, and he found himself on the pillow, in the act of scuttering away from Marian, darting lightly across her sleeping legs, down off the bed, into the pool of moonlight. He sat there, front paws raised.

Yes, it was true. He was heavier now, more mature. His dark eyes were huge in his head, his whiskers extended like searchlights around him. He ran a long foot over his silvered fur. Yes, the night before he had been a young male—now he was in his prime. The muscular joy of the previous night had changed into a richness of—he could only call it spirit. He felt kingly. The great testicles he was resting on were filled with generations. His memory stretched back into the dark burrows of antiquity, smoothly, endlessly . . . he was part of a great host, his time sense was forever, unbroken both forward and backward and in

other new directions, as if time cradled him in its arms.

He climbed up onto the windowsill and pressed his nose against the cold pane. He even felt part of the moon; he was all things. How young the moon was! He glided down the hall, passing the bedrooms of the sleeping girls, to the kitchen. In a straight line he moved across the checkered floor to the stove. Neither thirst nor hunger interested him now. . . .

A glow came from the hole—an extraordinary radiance. He knew it descended to an inconceivable depth which, at the very pit would change into something transcendent. He could feel his great phallus stirring in its scabbard of fur. There lay his life. He approached the opening, and odors rich and splendid with promise wrapped around him. To his helpless delight he heard strange, far-off singing.

But he paused. It was not for him yet. He could not go yet. He had unfinished business. He kept the thought of unfinished business carefully without content so that he would not suddenly become a man, crushed behind the stove. Marveling at his control, he turned away and made his way back to the bedroom. There he crawled up on the pillow beside Marian. It took all the rest of his control to remain beside her, repellent and alien as she was. But he curled up, pressing his long nose into his flank. There were, fortunately or unfortunately, hundreds of things to worry about . . . the large concerns . . . death and taxes, power and greed. . . . But he chose a small worry. The bill from Hilary's orthodontist. Not even itemized. It was outrageous. . . .

His long body, in rumpled pajamas twisted around him, informed him he was back again. As he lay there quietly in the cool sheets he found that the glow from the hole seemed to have lodged in his heart. Truly. So that if he opened his pajama top he would find his chest incandescent. He wanted to weep with longing. . . .

He sat up.

This was insanity!

He had never bargained for *this*.


What if he had gone down the hole? God knows what would really happen to him down there. It was obviously so much more than just playing around with some other mice. What, even, if he had *lost* the fight of the night before, and Marian and the girls had found his little carcass under the table at breakfast time? Good God, he was a responsible human being. . . .

He looked at Marian. He gently placed his hand on the soft curve of her hip. She mut-





*Treasure!*  
Tuesday, December 7  
8 p.m./7 p.m. Central\*  
on Public Television



*Voyage of the Hokule'a*  
Tuesday, January 18  
8 p.m./7 p.m. Central\*  
on Public Television

## Gulf welcomes you to another exciting National Geographic Season on PBS.

Last year Gulf Oil Corporation made it possible for two great American institutions to bring you some of the season's most exciting television.

Gulf's three-year commitment to the National Geographic Society and the Public Broadcasting Service goes beyond the usual corporate grant. We not only want to bring high-quality programs to the American audience; we want to strengthen Public Television, too.

The eight new specials you'll see over the next two years are original American-made documentaries produced by the National Geographic Society and WQED/Pittsburgh, a PBS production center.

Gulf funded the project because we believe that the future of Public Television depends on creating as well as broadcasting exceptional programming.

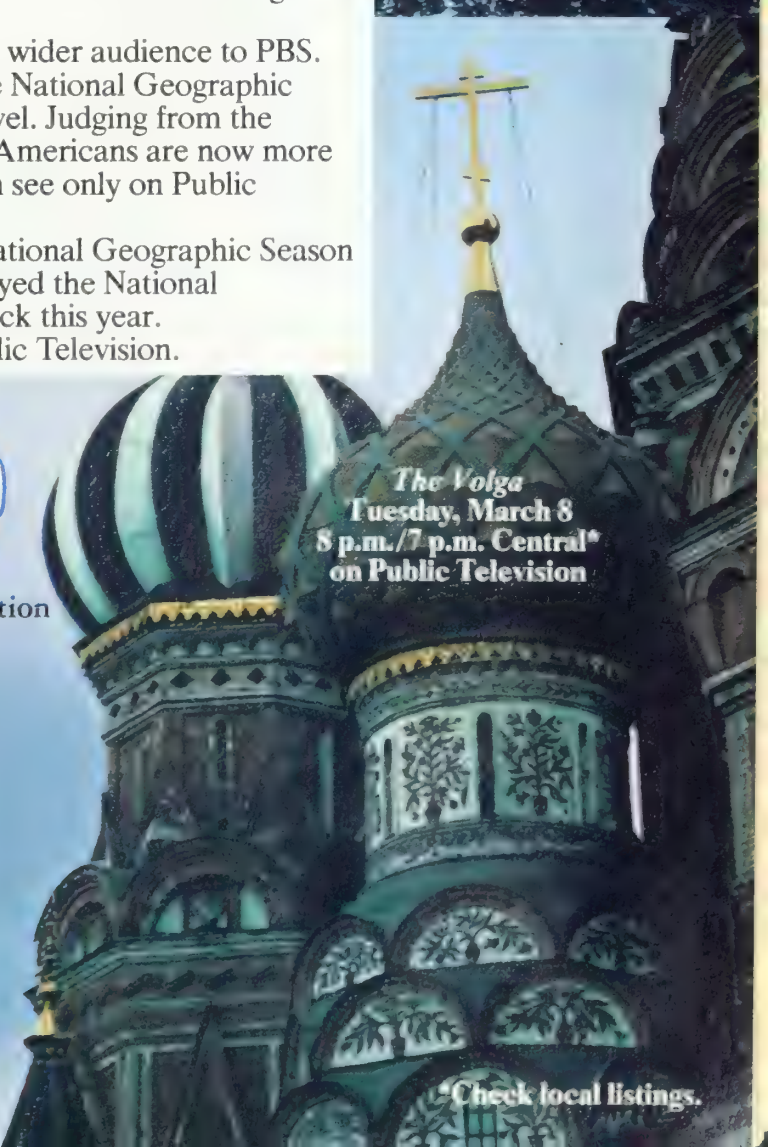
We're also committed to bringing a wider audience to PBS. So we've provided funds to promote the National Geographic Specials on both a national and local level. Judging from the response to the first season, millions of Americans are now more aware of the exciting programs they can see only on Public Television.

Now we're ready for the Second National Geographic Season on PBS. We hope the millions who enjoyed the National Geographic Specials last year will be back this year.

It's another exciting season on Public Television.



Gulf Oil Corporation



*The Volga*  
Tuesday, March 8  
8 p.m./7 p.m. Central\*  
on Public Television

\*Check local listings.



tered something in her sleep. He couldn't get the words, but they sounded forlorn. Quietly slipping out of bed, he went to Hilary and Barbara's room. It was so crammed with clothes, books and records, beauty aids and sports equipment, there was no place to sit down, so he stood there looking down at their faces. They were sleeping as if their lives depended on it. And in Robin's room, she too had her fist clenched into her pillow, her young face sternly baffled. He smiled wanly and, bending down, kissed the spot where her dark hair grew from her temple. Then he returned to bed, taking his place beside Marian. He was suddenly desperately tired. But filled with the warm, dull comfort of renunciation.

**H**IS SENSE OF RENUNCIATION remained with him until ten o'clock the next morning. Then, on his way to court, cutting through a corner of the park, he caught a glimpse of a gray squirrel whisking up a tree and was suddenly shattered by an intolerable sense of loss. He sat down heavily on a bench. This was hopeless! He realized he had not truly renounced his life as a mouse—he had only put it off.

But he could *not* put it off. His mouse existence would not wait for him. What he had vaguely formulated while helping Robin with her algebra now presented itself to him with the clarity of a judicial sentence: he was losing his time as a mouse! Even as he sat here on the bench another life was going inexorably on within him. The mouse in him—like all creatures, was growing, towards death. His four experiences had been only brief, kaleidoscopic glimpses, rites of passage in time—time wildly accelerated.

So what if he waited too long and *then* tried to get back—he knew he *would* try to get back—and found he was a long-dead mouse? His stomach turned over with horror. *That* would be true insanity. At best, Marian would wake up to a dry little skeleton on the pillowcase; at worst, to a human vegetable beside her—he would be a vegetable for Marian and the girls for the long unthinkable years left to him as a man. . . .

Abruptly, he hailed a cab and directed the driver to the Public Library. There, in the cathedral-like Catalogue Room, he first, in his urgency, looked under "Titles," and found himself staring at *Of Mice and Men*, crazily believing, for a moment, that someone *else* had had his problem. He shook his head and moved over to "Subjects."

He found what he was looking for in *Raising Small Animals for Pleasure and Profit*.

*Young mice are born naked with their eyes closed. They grow rapidly and begin to eat solid food at two to three weeks of age. They attain sexual maturity at two to three months.*

Then, there it was:

*The life span of a mouse is three to five years.*

He sat back, holding the Department of Agriculture pamphlet in his hands as if it were a sacred text. So he *did* have some time. His rapid development would now ease off, perhaps it had caught up with him, and he would be in his prime for a long "time" . . . besides, time was so relative, he knew that now. His life as a mouse would *seem* as long as his life as a man. . . .

The glow from the mousehole enveloped him as he read on with the intentness and reverence he had never brought to any printed words before. . . .

*The Mouse (family Muridae) is thought to have had its ancient origin in Asia and has spread to every part of the world. Its great success as a species is due to its amazing adaptability and astonishing fecundity. In ideal circumstances, one male mouse can sire 3,000 of its species in a year.*

And

*That mice do have singing ability should not be dismissed as an old wives' tale. What they make is a high wiry trill which is mostly supersonic. Only occasionally does it fall within human auditory range.*

Paul sat there, immobile with enchantment, staring out over the bent heads at the long tables.

**B**ACK AT THE OFFICE, he brushed off his secretary's messages—urgent queries as to why he had not shown up in court. He went into his office, saying he did not want to be disturbed on any account. At his desk he surrounded himself with his personal files, grateful that as a lawyer he had always kept his affairs in order.

There would be more than enough for Marian to live on. And the girls could go to college—they could become doctors or lawyers or captains of industry. . . . Staring out of the window, he felt good about it all. It was not as if he were deserting them. He was sparing them.

There was a slight flaw in his logic. After all, he should be able to stop turning himself into a mouse just as some people could stop smoking or drinking if they absolutely had



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to—but . . .

But.

He did not *want* to. His whole life was a dream—he saw that now. He would not be escaping, he would be *entering* reality . . . with all its wholeness, immediacy, all its dangers. He possibly would have to fight every day for his survival.

For the sake of the glow . . .

He thought of writing Marian a note. But then it might be interpreted as suicide. No, Marian would have to live with a little mystery in her life. He thought of Marian, her straightforward brown eyes, her slender organized hands . . . yes, some mystery might do her good.

And the girls? He had never lied to them. There had never been anything to lie about.

"My dearest Hilary, Barbara, and Robin . . ." How could he even begin to explain? He couldn't even explain it to himself. Best to leave it. He was glad that his life had been such that there was nothing to point to another woman or any irregularity for which they would have to be ashamed. The staff had gone home, and he closed the door on a long, respectable career.

It was his night to get the dinner, and he stopped by Gristede's to buy tournedos, with refrigerated Béarnaise sauce, endives and watercress, frozen puffed potatoes. At La Pâtisserie he bought a chocolate pie, at the wine shop, two bottles of Nuits-St.-Georges. Robin was just beginning to appreciate that sort of thing. The others had gone through it, to Granola.

Laden with his packages, he let himself into the apartment, into the deep quiet of meditation, and began to prepare the meal. Candles on the table, real napkins for a change. As he opened the oven door to put the tournedos in for broiling, he tried not to think about what lay behind the stove . . .

And then he was seated at the table with his family. His dinner seemed to assuage the usual feelings, and it had been a good day for everybody; Robin had gotten a B in her algebra, Barbara's team had won, and Hilary had met a wonderful boy who, he gathered from her description, treated her just like a boy. And Marian, he could tell, was feeling amorous. He looked at her across the candlelight. She was a stunning woman, really.

And the girls. Leaning his elbows on the table, he looked from one to the other. How strong and splendid they were, with rounded flesh and satiny skin . . . like, like large white calla lilies on thick green stems . . . He felt a constriction in his throat.

"You are all so beautiful," he said. And they

were, as they turned their intelligent face toward him, with Marian's high cheekbones and his dark level eyebrows, which, on them gave them a look of lovely disdain. "So beautiful . . ."

"Oh, daddy," Hilary said. But she looked pleased.

**T**HAT NIGHT IN BED he made Marian as happy as he possibly could. When he was certain she was asleep, he got out of bed and went to the window gently drawing the curtains apart. He looked down into the park.

"Goodbye," he said.

Then, idiotically, to a deity he could not conceive of, "Thy will be done."

For really, the matter did seem out of his hands. He would never worry like a man again. He was losing his life in order to gain it—suddenly all of the spiritual insights of both East and West made sense.

There was no need to lie down beside Marian. He took off his pajamas, folded them carefully and put them at the foot of the bed, and lay down on the floor in the pool of moonlight. Closing his eyes, he summoned his spurious mantra.

Shiva

Shiva

A terrible pain cut through him.

He found he was licking a great gash in his shoulder. His fur was matted, the flesh of a severed muscle was bulging out of the wound, and under that the white glistening of bone. Something had gone wrong. Obviously he had been in a fight during the day—perhaps even while he had been sitting in the park. But he felt strangely calm; it did not matter. Nothing was perfect. He was tough, canny. His tongue could heal. Even the pain did not matter. All that mattered was to get to the hole.

He dragged himself down the endless hallway, across the checkered linoleum. The stove was like a huge white cliff shining and beckoning to him, and even from a distance came the clean odor of sanctity—a great clear gust of primal fresh air. Exultantly, he dragged himself under the stove, pushing his way through dust, to the hole. The radiance from it reached out to him and then, even wounded and faint, *he* possessed the glow, the strength, steadiness, power, the purity of intention. Between his rear legs he bore his destiny like a golden chalice. Elongating his body, and flattening his long silvery whiskers against his jowls, he slithered down into the hole—into the deep labyrinth of the endless possibilities of his race. □

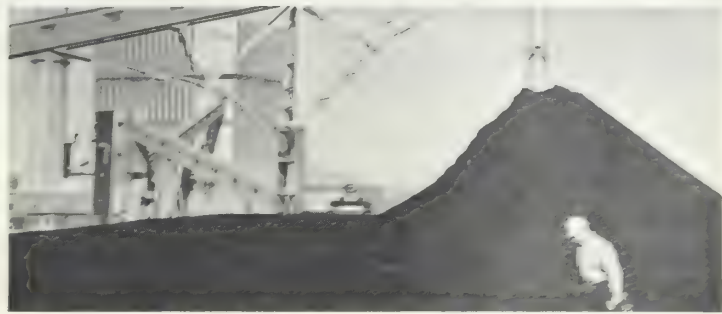
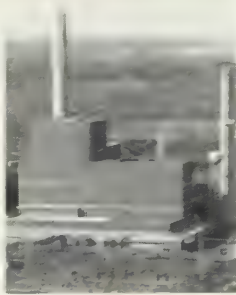


# When it comes to energy, we're in the countdown years.

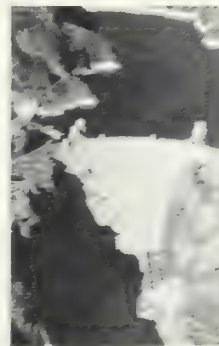
An electrically powered irrigation system has greatly increased productivity on this farm in northeastern Colorado, near Fort Morgan. These huge sprinklers are now a common sight in the nation's millions of acres of once parched and useless land.



Basin Electric Power Cooperative's new lignite-fired plant near Stanton, N.D., is part of a complex generating power for more than 100 rural electric systems in eight states. Long a leader in mined area reclamation, Basin is also researching productivity levels of reclaimed land.



One of America's newest consumer-owned rural electric cooperatives, Mt. Wheeler Power, Ely, Nev., is wiping away the last great power desert in the West. Mt. Wheeler has strung more than 1000 miles of line to serve a few hundred families in Nevada and Utah.



One of the world's largest dams is Hoover (Boulder) Dam, near Las Vegas, Nev. Hydroelectric projects in the U.S. today meet about one-sixth of the nation's total electric energy needs. Few sites remain which can be developed for hydro projects.

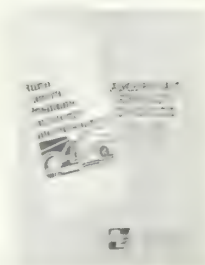
Day by day the earth's supply of oil and natural gas—on which we rely heavily—gets smaller. By the year 2000 most of it will be gone.

It's a frightening countdown. It wouldn't be so bad if we were not an energy-based nation. But we are. Everything that enters into the way we live in America depends on energy—food, shelter, jobs, recreation, *everything*.

There are several promising possibilities—such as solar and geothermal power—which may provide at least partial answers for the long term.

But for the immediate future we must turn to available alternative sources of energy.

That means nuclear power and coal. We have to concentrate on those areas of development *now*—before the countdown goes too far.

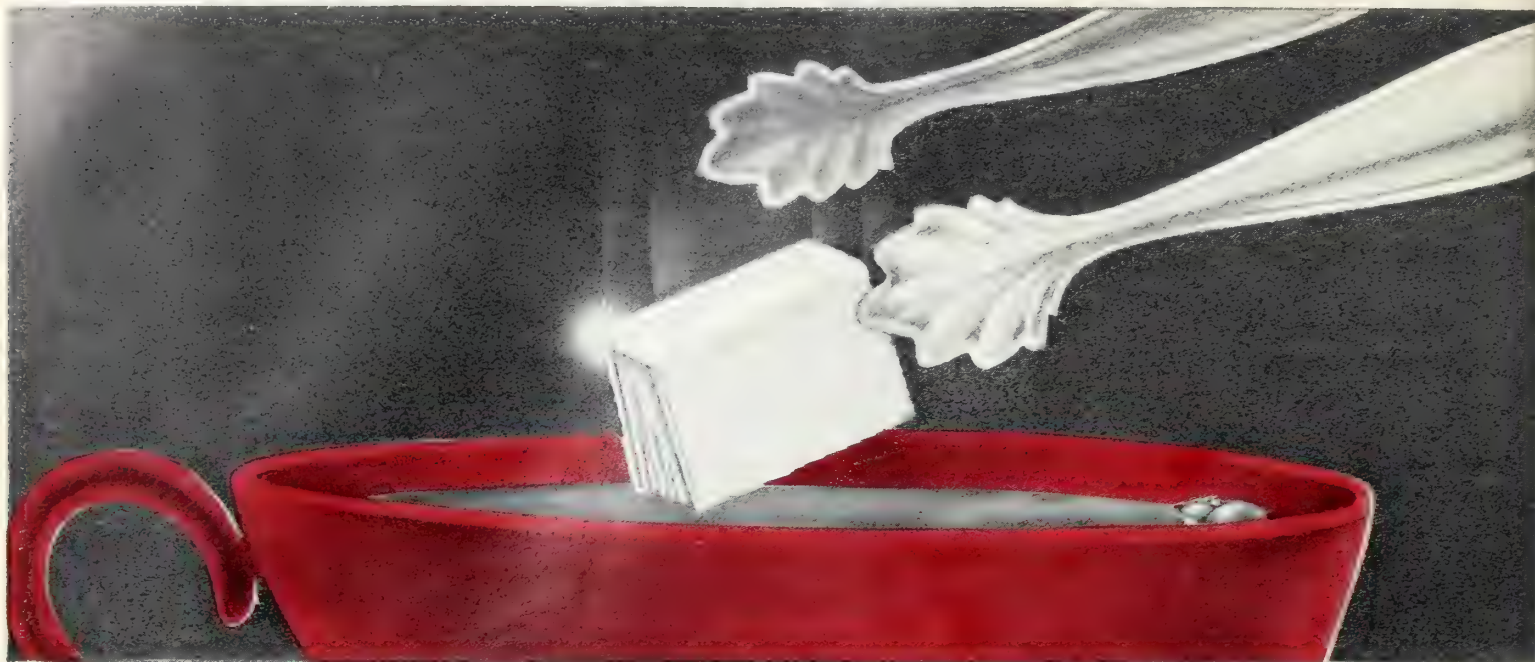


The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association is the service organization for nearly 1000 rural electric cooperatives and public power utilities serving some 25 million people in the U.S. Write "Viewpoints," NRECA, 2000 Florida Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, for your information packet on rural electric energy positions.

America's rural electric systems







## LOVE IN THE GARDEN STATE

by Brigid Brophy

**Marry Me**, by John Updike. Alfred A. Knopf, \$7.95.

**J**OHN UPDIKE subtitles his new book "A Romance." That would have been a classy claim in the fourteenth century and a still reputable one, from the literary point of view, in the eighteenth. Presumably, however, the label is couched in modern English and is meant to declare that the book has a high saccharin content. The promise is fulfilled passably but nothing like brilliantly. In a world where *Marry Me* is offered in a "signed, boxed, limited edition" at \$20 and, under its workaday format and price, is obviously straining for bestsellerdom, I can only note a severe weakening in the public stomach for sentimentality. *Marry Me* will make you queasy and will set your teeth on edge—but only mildly. The great masters of the unfair literary knife in the guts (J.M. Barrie, Hans Andersen, Louisa M. Alcott) needn't make room on their slope (the slippery one) of Parnassus. John Updike aspires no higher than the written equivalent of kitsch wallpaper for the nursery.

He starts out, indeed, in an idiom that resembles heightened baby talk:

*Yes, yes, the touch, the touch of their skins the length of their*

*bodies in the air, under the sun. The sun made his closed eyes swim in red; her side and upward shoulder warmed and gradually melted. They felt no hurry; this was perhaps the gravest proof that they were, Jerry and Sally, the original man and woman—that they felt no hurry, that they did not so much excite each other as put the man and woman in each other to rest.*

This breath-bated lisp is presumably meant to mimic Jerry's sensations. It is, however, the author who must bear the responsibility for it—at least until, as it is surely destined and was quite probably designed to do, the thing becomes a motion picture, when the lame lyricism of the words will no doubt be translated into not-quite-in-focus figures loping without effort over the dunes, and Jerry and Sally will "put the man and woman in each other to rest" via the image of breaking surf.

Although John Updike is awful, he just isn't virtuoso enough to be excruciatingly awful. That opening love scene by the shore is the worst he can do. He quickly falls off from its highlit manner and into routines of sit-com domesticity of the kind you can see any old banal night on television.

All the same, it is clearly the cinema, and not the television, screen

that the book is keeping one eye on. About such matters as sex, menstruation, and excretion, which the small screen still often pretends don't exist, *Marry Me* is moderately explicit, if a touch twee. And the social setting, middle-class rich but without style or cultural roots, is one I have always taken to be a phenomenon peculiar not to North American society but to North American film scripts.

Far from making good their impersonation of "the original man and woman," Jerry and Sally prove to be very unoriginally circumstanced. Each is married to someone else. What draws out the story, and indeed gives it a pretext for existing at all, is that Jerry can't make up his mind whether he wants to ask for a divorce and marry Sally. As a matter of fact, Sally seems almost equally ambivalent, but since she barely exists as a person her indecision doesn't make much of itself.

Jerry, on the other hand, is characterized almost exclusively by his inability to choose. He possesses only two other distinct traits. The first, which he shares with his wife, is to be constantly reminded of paintings (and occasionally of sculpture). The narrative is littered with hands "like a Picasso hand," "Arp-shape lamps," the "so-intensely green trees beside



the road—she had seen them before, in a Monet, or was it a Pissarro?” and so forth. As these references come in flurries, I think they mark the places where the author reminded himself to carry out consistently the background (they met at art school) he has attributed to Jerry and his wife. Jerry’s second characteristic, which is all his own, is retardation: intellectual (manifested in religiosity), linguistic (in conversation with his mistress he adopts “an adolescent manner of speech”), and perhaps even physical: “He looked up, a tall child with wet cheeks, a cut knee, a hopeful smile.” So lovingly do narrative, wife, and mistress dwell on Jerry’s unseasonable boyishness that I began to hope that the two women who inexplicably love him would turn out to be elderly homosexual men in drag. No such luck.

**F**OR ITS FIRST THIRD, the plot is kept ticking by the Victorian farce convention that, if you’re married, you necessarily conceal any love affairs you may have from your spouse, a convention as implausible as the one whereby old-fashioned mystery stories were set in motion by the heroine’s quite wanton unwillingness to tell the police that she has found an unknown corpse in her bedroom. When this aged clockwork threatens to run down, Jerry tells his wife (Ruth), and Sally’s husband (Richard) finds out, about the Jerry-Sally love affair.

That should provide the impetus for further imbroglio, but the book seems exhausted of energy. Ruth suffers a car crash that may be an unconscious suicide attempt. In describing it the author’s breathless style deepens into labored breathing, and his sentence structure becomes as monotonously fake-simple as anything in Hemingway. In a paragraph of eighteen sentences, eight begin with “She.” These are interleaved with four cast in the same syntactical form but with a different subject; and there are three sentences where the subject is again “she” but a phrase or an adjective has been hooked on to the front.


At home—in, that is, both marital homes—the collisions are of the domestic kind, between lovers, spouses, and children. These scenes may be intended for high tragicomedy. They

come out as take-home sweet-and-sour. Both married couples have children: to, I think, the same extent in both cases, but it’s hard to be sure since there is small means of telling one child from another. The cuteness that you might expect to attend the children in a “romance” is largely lacking. No doubt it’s all been absorbed by Jerry. At a moment when he thinks, incorrectly, that he’s made his wife pregnant again, he tells her: “You’re going to have a little baby!” Quite apart from the fact that he might more reasonably have expected her to have a big one, taking after him, this speech seems to me to epitomize John Updike’s half-bakedness. If he can conceive a character who thinks a woman is going to have “a little baby,” ought he not to have dared to go the whole horrid hog and made it a *dear* little baby?

The symmetry of the two families is evidently supposed to be echoed by the construction of the book. The outer chapters propound the Jerry-Sally affair and the inner ones take the reader through, in turn, “The Reacting of Ruth” and “The Reacting of Richard.” Ruth and Richard com-

plete some sort of pattern inasmuch as, rather against the grain of Ruth’s character and what is discernible of Richard’s, they too have been lovers. As the affair is over and they don’t want to divorce their spouses, they obey the Victorian convention and don’t disclose their relationship to the other pair of lovers. Readers are probably meant to take their silence as an ironically reversed image of the main pattern.

Indeed, all the insistence on pattern, together with the chessboard diagrams of knight’s moves that occur sometimes in the text, is probably intended to convince readers that something rigorous, formal, and logical is taking place. No doubt the readers are invited to be all the more surprised when the schema is ruptured towards the end. Jerry decides, at last, not to run off with and marry his mistress. Then the narrative shows him doing just that. Then it turns out (another cinematic cliché translated into print and obviously aching to be translated back again) that that bit of the story is only a daydream of Jerry’s. I suspect that in fact the author became infected by Jerry’s desire to have his cake



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and eat it. Not only does he provide the book with *both* the wish-fulfillment endings of which romances are susceptible, but he's souped up his rusty old machinery with as large and modish a dash of "the experimental novel" as the market for romances can be expected to stand.

For all the fuss about pattern, the intellectual and structural content of *Marry Me* is to my mind rather lower than in a run-of-the-mill political thriller by the sort of writer who's never praised in high places. The pattern is pointless because there's nothing in it. The children have been written into the book solely to tug at the heartstrings (on the grounds that, should there be a divorce, some parent or other is bound to forfeit some of them). Their tugging is feeble, since Jerry has used up most of the available childishness; and there's nothing much for them to tug *at*, because Jerry has gobbled up most of the available characteristics of any kind and has reduced half the adult quartet, Richard and Sally, to cipherdom.

One side of the symmetrical pattern collapses, therefore, through debility. The other is overbalanced by the over-ornamentation of Ruth. This character at least the author has not left devoid of characteristics. Indeed I fear he would applaud the subtlety of a reader who discerned in Ruth the true heroine of the romance.

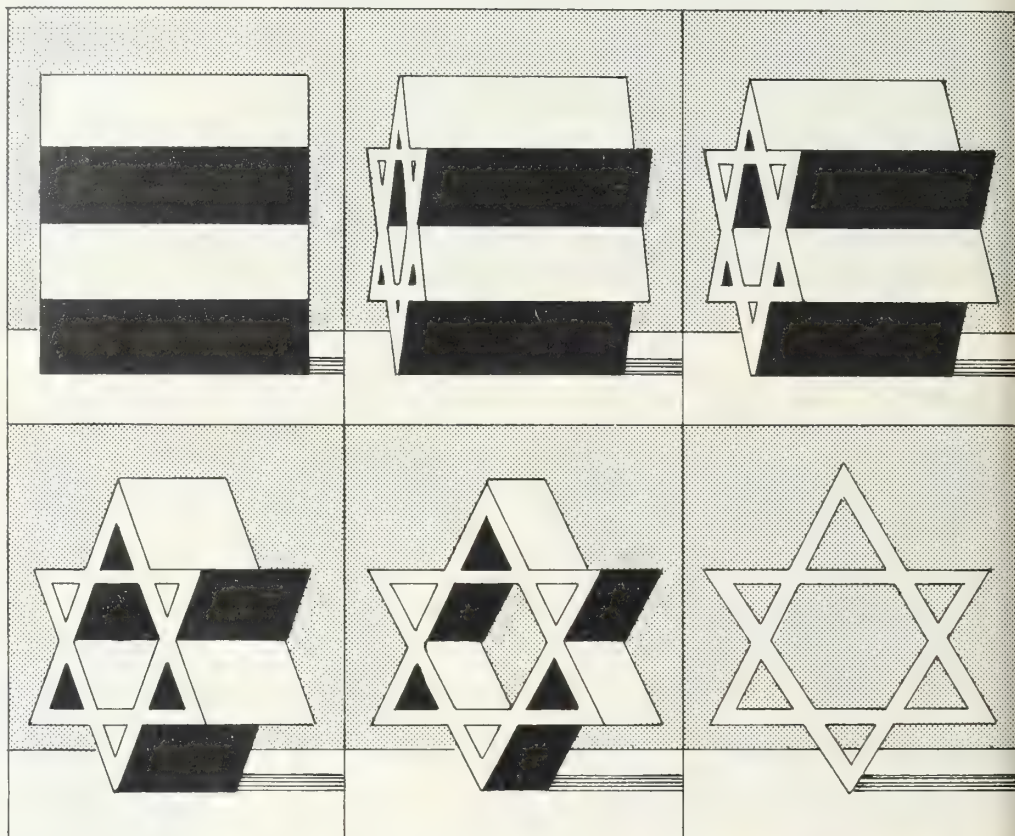
One of the things he endows Ruth with is a father who has a "deafening, benign, pontifical face." I spent some time wondering in what sense a face could deafen anyone, but I've concluded that by "deafening" Mr. Updike means "going deaf." In this he may be following a usage of 1680 (marked "rare" by the Oxford Dictionary), though I think he's more likely to be following, by a false analogy, *Time* magazine's adjective "balding." But I still don't see why Mr. Updike thinks that the part of Ruth's father that is going deaf is his face. In a passage that flirts with the pale mauve ghost of Maurice Maeterlinck but lacks the courage to conjure it in full cry, Mr. Updike informs his readers that the rain talked to Ruth. But it's when he plumbs her soul or at least her memories of puberty that he will provoke any reader with an aesthetic nerve in him to blushes. Ruth, he asserts,

"had felt too light to be suddenly burdened with breasts, with a woman's massive, central position in the universe."

The whole empty and under-imagined little anecdote is set at the time of the Kennedy Presidency. Readers from the United States may be better placed than a European to guess what that is meant to signify or achieve. I conjecture that the ostensible motive is to evoke the most recent version of the Golden Age

myth, presumably as an appropriate background for "the original man and woman"—as it were, Eden, the Garden state. But perhaps the effective psychological impulse was a matter of association of clichés. It must have been just about at that period that those cinematic lollers over the sand first settled into their slow-motion stride. □

*Brigid Brophy, a critic and playwright, is the author of The Adventures of God in His Search for the Black Girl.*



## RETURN TO THE SOURCE

by John Hollander

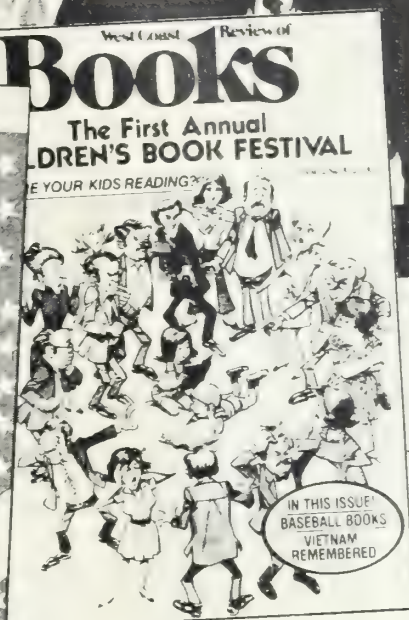
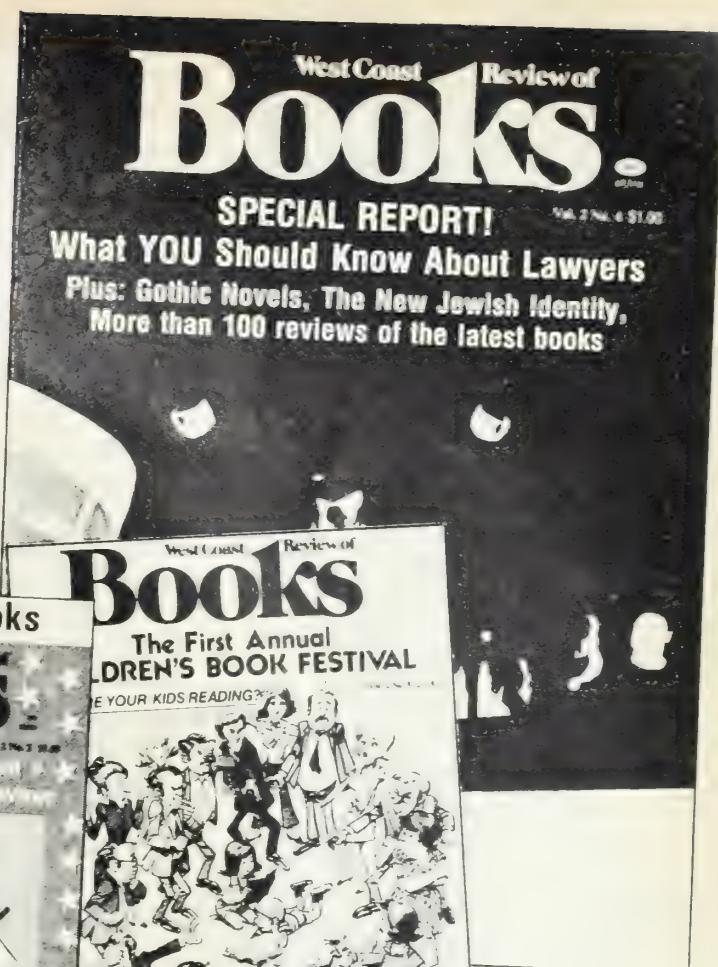
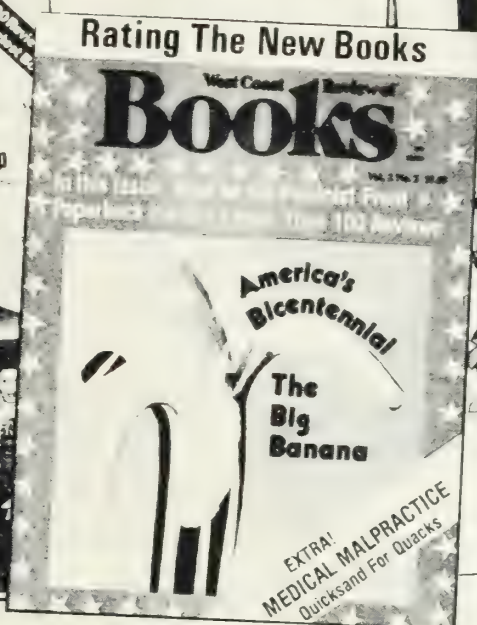
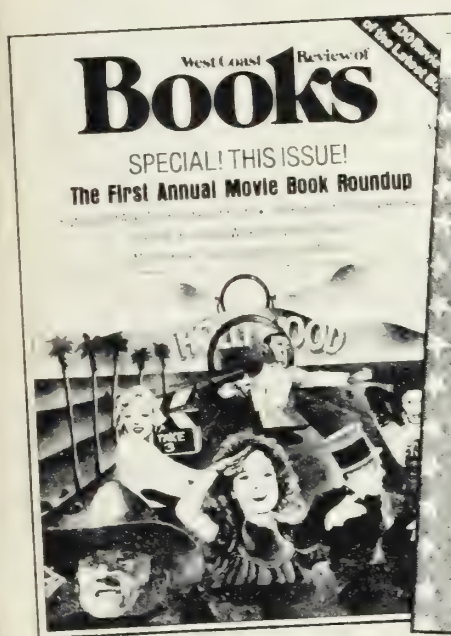
**To Jerusalem and Back**, by Saul Bellow. Viking, \$7.95.

**O**F ALL POSSIBLE subjects, travel is the most difficult for an artist, as it is easiest for the journalist," remarked W. H. Auden of Henry James's itinerary of his return to the United States in 1906, *The American Scene*. "For the latter, the interesting event is the new, the extraordinary, the comic, the shocking, and all that the peripatetic journalist requires is a flair for being on the spot where and when such events happen. . . . The artist, on the other hand, is deprived of his most treasured liberty, the freedom to invent." In 1967 Saul Bellow went to Israel

to cover the Six-Day War as a journalist; it was a moment of triumph, and the Holocaust seemed to have been sealed in the past. In 1975 he returned to Jerusalem as an artist, after eight years during which America, Israel, and their relations to each other and to the rest of the world had saddened. His account of the journey is by turns comic, bitter, nostalgic, meditative, earnest, flighty, and tragic, but perhaps its central strand involves Bellow's lack of any need for "the freedom to invent." Two moments, one in the dual history of Israel (the quarter-century-old modern state and the several-thousand-year-old people) and the other in the chronicler's own life, seem to have coincided with imagi-



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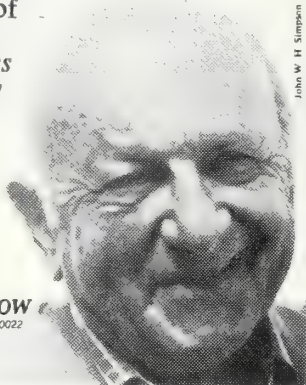
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John W. H. Simpson

## BOOKS

native consequences: Bellow's journey there and then could take him to a world many of whose scenes, characters, and significances are like those of his fictions.

This fine book (it appeared in slightly different form in *The New Yorker*) starts out in London on the way to Jerusalem, and at the end returns briefly to London again and then home to Bellow's Chicago. But the trip is a journey inward and backward as well; the author is an important novelist, a Chicagoan, a literary intellectual, a Jew, a lover of Russian literature, and it is these regions of identity through which he voyages. The "To . . . and Back" of the title signifies not the search of a reporter for a story, but the ironic questing of a firmly rooted artist of the Jewish Diaspora in his travel abroad to a lately marked-out center, and safely home to a periphery of exile again. The title comprises as well an additional series of narrative and speculative oscillations between Israel and America, emotions and ideologies, things and texts, private lives and public roles, which give the book its energy and its structure, and which fill it with rewarding asides, at first glance seeming almost irrelevant, on literature, politics, and the life of the mind.

Every artist's "personal account" is personal in its own way. The opening pages of Bellow's book may mislead us a bit into thinking that its mode of ironic perception, half-affirming, half-disclaiming the author's identification with the object of his journey, will be maintained throughout. On boarding the plane in London with his gentile wife, Bellow is seated next to one of a group of ultra-orthodox Hasidim, living and working in America but unable to speak English or to see the need for doing so. The author engages this young man in Yiddish, and, not to offend so fiercely innocent an orthodoxy, endeavors to order a kosher meal for himself, fails because the supply has been exhausted, and finds the combination of his fluent Yiddish and ignored dietary laws evoking a baroque conversation with his neighbor. As the plane lands, the State of Israel absorbs them both. The acutely assimilated American writer with a zest for the heroic, and the even more acutely intransigent sec-

tarian (whose customary dress preserves nothing more Judaistic than the middle-class clothing of nineteenth-century Poland): together they stand for the Diaspora itself, disembarking on the ancient soil of an inconveniently belated nation-state. For the unworldly one, the secular republic primarily extends an ease of access to sacred ground, shadowed perhaps by its use of the holy language for mundane purposes, possibly not excluding the abominable. For the chronicler sitting beside him, committed neither to mending walls nor smashing them, but rather to meditating on the ways in which walls make sense of the unbounded, the fact of the nation-state as a democratic republic is itself a sacred point. "Where there is no paradox, there is no life," says one of his Israeli acquaintances some pages later. A lesser writer might have allowed this to sum up the range of his experience. But Bellow does not, and the structure of his account leads him as much into personal affirmation as ironic withdrawal, into moments of joy and stretches of skepticism, and even into one glimpse, proper to sacred ground, of a transcendence of time and place.

His book is no travel diary, although its episodes are shaped by walks, visits, encounters, excursions, consultations, and formal interviews. The book is full of talk: Bellow records the differing views of his informants on the book's central question—the survival of Israel—often commenting himself, but always leaving the reader at once uncertain of the correctness of the reading of events, and yet convinced of a kind of humane authoritativeness in most of the speakers, if only perhaps because they are all dwelling on the shores of a nightmare of annihilation. These speakers are full of theories about Israel and the Arab nations, the U.S., the U.S.S.R., the Palestinians, Israel itself. An almost Dostoevskian excitement—kindled by the relations of character to ideology—frequently occurs. But the scenes and anecdotes can lead, often wittily, into personal association: autographed pictures of Hubert Humphrey presented to the barber at his hotel can prompt Bellow to remember, with nostalgia and chagrin, how at a White House banquet

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he was not recognized by Humphrey. In another instance, he is led into a meditation on Jean-Paul Sartre and contemporary French culture.

Throughout all this is a sense of the grotesque awkwardness of Jewish survival having to be intimately associated with Middle Eastern politics since World War I. "Wouldn't it be the most horrible of ironies if the Jews had collected themselves conveniently in one country for a second Holocaust," observes an American academic, and Bellow's recurrent theme frequently causes the reader to wonder if the Holocaust is not perhaps merely suspended in a forty-year lull. But the book is held together by a vision of something more universal as well: "I sometimes think there are two Israels," says Bellow at a late point in the account. "The real one is territorially insignificant. The other, the mental Israel, is immense, a country inestimably important, playing a major role in the world, as broad as all history—and perhaps as deep as sleep."

The "sleep" is all the more meaningful here, since Bellow has characterized as a kind of undogmatic lumber the attitudes of many Jews toward Israel and, more generally, of Westerners toward their own as yet unpoliced states. Sartre, particularly, exemplifies for him the state in which "A great deal of intelligence can be invested in ignorance when the need for illusion is deep." Henry Kissinger is another of the book's trimmers; and Joseph Alsop and the late Arabist Marshall Hodgson display a *sancta simplicitas* in these pages. There are palpable heroic types from Saul Bellow novels as well. Teddy Kollek, the energetic mayor of Jerusalem gets an almost Emersonian characterization: "A force of nature, without coaxing he makes his feelings clear." Meyer Weisgall, founder of the Weizmann Institute of Scientific Research, is for him another entrepreneurial adventurer, and a ship's engineer and kibbutz-dweller exemplifies a type of endurance beyond achievement.

Life and literature, past and present, are confronted also in the shadow of Russia, which falls across so many of these pages; it surrounds Bellow's own world as Islam does Israel, a complex presence. The spiritual home of Dostoevsky, Sol-

zhenitsyn, Sinyavsky (who appear as ironic points of light), it is also the center in this book of a totalitarian darkness, of an ideological cloud which can almost take amusement from the temporary status of a bit of territory through which a remnant of rootless cosmopolitans have drilled to reconnect their roots, thereby incidentally infecting the Middle East with a touch of serious but eradicable bourgeois democracy.

Bellow's interlocutors are doves and hawks, optimists and prophets of some kind of destruction; he takes no position himself on the Arab world, but only hums a kind of refrain throughout this book: the problematic existence of Israel as a nation "means only that the Jews, because they are Jews, have never been able to take the right to live as a natural right." Bellow's deep involvement with Jewish survival is somehow connected in these reflections with a fierce loyalty to American democratic pluralism (notwithstanding the destructive necessity of Israel's political dependence on the U.S.). He finds them both threatened from within and without, and reacts with continuous distaste to what he interprets as overripe innocence, and the weariness and satiation of the West with its own noblest traditions.

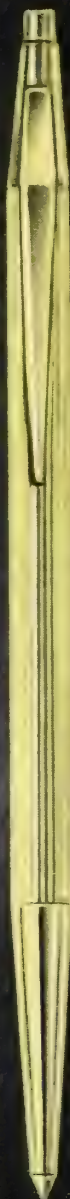
What gives *To Jerusalem and Back* a unifying tone is in some measure the presence of the author's personality as a referee, a supplier of historical facts and provider of a ruminative literary sensibility. There is no trace of the bitterness toward women we see in his later novels. And there seems to be no need, in this particular mode of personal reportage, for rhetorical devices of distancing and framing the narrator—one thinks of Norman Mailer's "he," which is sometimes engaging, sometimes presumptuous like a historical past tense in French. Bellow's own dialectic of identities is itself emblematic of the whole milieu of his journey, and the many speakers seem at the end to have been internalized as a chorus of hopes, fears, and pledges. The controlling ironies are ultimately those of history rather than those of personality. □

John Hollander is a professor of English at Hunter College. His most recent book of poetry is *Reflections on Espionage*.

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# ACCOUNTS OF WAR

by Josiah Bunting

**The Face of Battle**, by John Keegan. Viking, \$10.95.

**A** J.P. TAYLOR IS quoted as having said that the "sole function of history is to amuse." *Gaminerie*, most probably, and not worth the obvious and boring retort. But there is a subspecies of history, enormously successful with the middlebrow public, whose only function *would* appear to confirm Mr. Taylor's comment. This is military history, with its near relatives, military biography and the memoirs of military men. They go down like popcorn: no illusion of nourishment is created, but it tastes good and people want more.

As a matter of fact, popular military history is usually neither nourishing nor readable, but people read it for all kinds of reasons. They are drawn to the study of violence in which they have not participated. They like the familiar talk of regiments and tactics, and they are comforted to read how heroic qualities—courage, endurance, tactical acuity, panache, kindness, and dedication to duty—make a difference.

If military history is to have any utility, its authors must be able to generalize about problems of leadership and tactics, morale and logistics common to many battles. This is very difficult. There is a more vexing, sometimes intractable problem: getting the "facts." Most military units have "military historians"—members of the commanders' staffs, usually officers working under the unit adjutant. They are required to write combat reports. They lie. They may not always intend to lie, but they are (1) at the mercy of information fed them; (2) anxious to please their commanders and make their units look good; and (3) usually neither trained for their work nor very bright. It is largely from what *they* write that military historians, popular or academic, must take their facts. Military historians may also read accounts of contem-

porary journalists, letters from the front; memoirs of participants. They may walk the ground. They may also interview participants immediately after battle, a technique perfected during the wars in Korea and Vietnam by Gen. S.L.A. Marshall. But invariably they bring to their work baggages of bias, prejudice . . . whatever.

**I**T WILL NOT DO to be too flip. For not studying the causes of war and the way wars are fought is like not going to the doctor when an absent fingering of the neck discloses a tumor an inch thick. As well stop all cancer research; as well abandon the search for its causes, treatment, and cures.

Much is written about how wars begin, about "long-range causes" and the miscalculations of enemy intent which ordinarily precipitate war. A most distinguished line of historians, beginning, in the West, with Thucydides, has taught us all we need to know about why wars come about. We pay them little attention; or, rather, forget what they have told us when we stop being spectators and become participants.

The line between popular and, let us say, academic military history is difficult to locate. Historians who write about the *causes* of war are honored in their profession. With rare exceptions, those who write *about* war, about battles, are not. That this should be so attests to the professional academic suspicion of any writer of nonfiction who becomes "popular." Few universities hire and pay military historians; a tiny percentage of doctoral dissertations in history are about war. So the most successful and most admired practitioners of the craft have tended to be women and men unconnected with universities: Barbara Tuchman, Douglas Freeman, Cornelius Ryan, Elizabeth Longford (sections of whose *Wellington: The Years of the Sword* represent models of the craft)

Bruce Catton, S.L.A. Marshall.

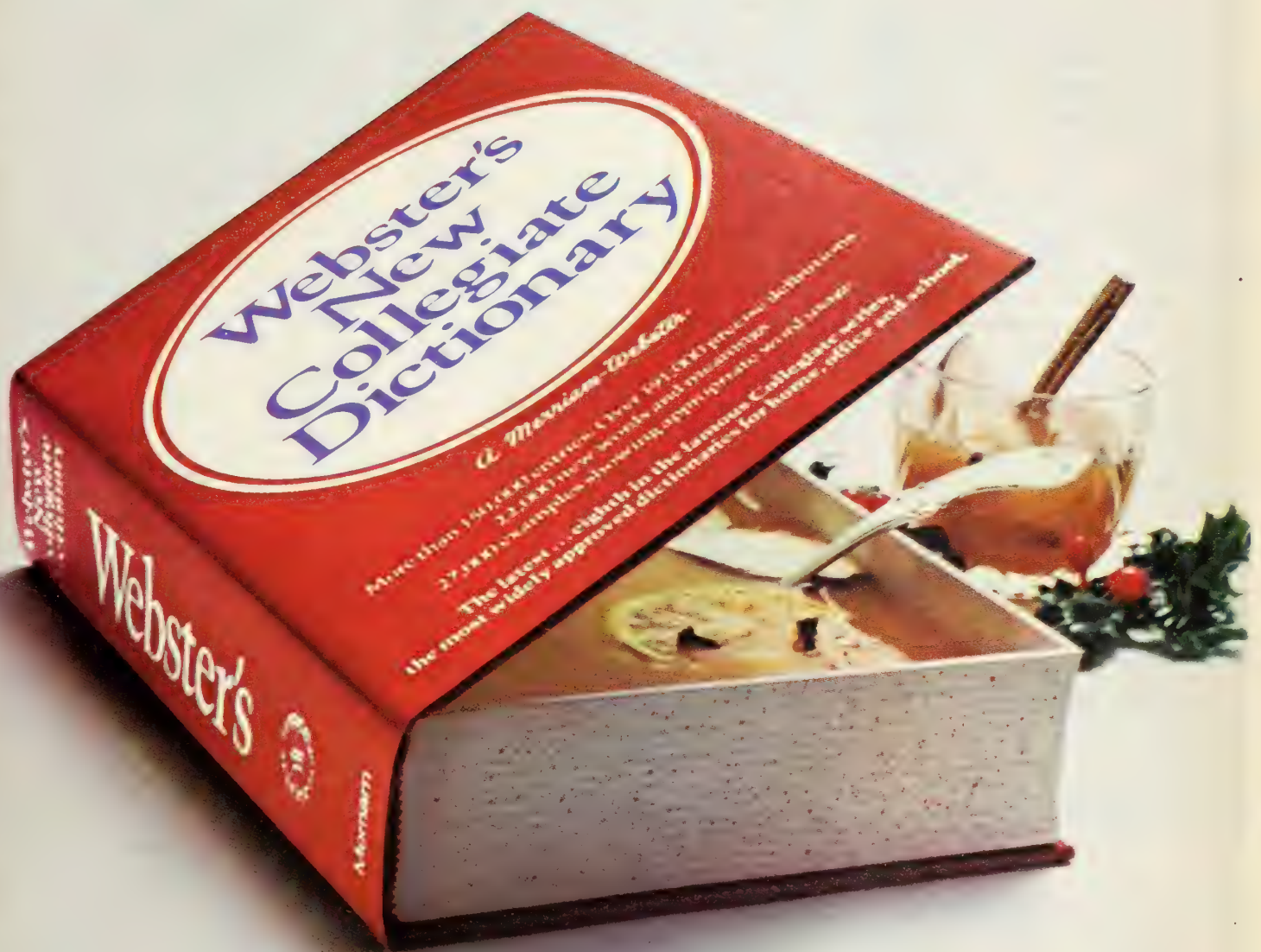
The most accurate descriptions of battle, of men in war, are to be found in imaginative literature. Stendhal is better, more *useful*, on Waterloo than any historian who ever wrote about it. He isolates the dominant characteristic of large military combats: confusion. Lieutenant Fabrizio, in *The Charterhouse of Parma*, gaping and exhausted, wonders what the hell is going on, his field of vision randomly populated with "suites" of officers dashing about, imagining they are controlling things—in reality as confused as he. Yet their influence was as weighty, as controlling, as Lyndon Johnson's selection of tactical targets for his Air Force in Vietnam.

**T**HE QUESTION OF the extent to which men in high command truly influence the course of events in battle is one of several posed in *The Face of Battle*, John Keegan's important study of military history and historiography. It is a book which straddles the line between academic and popular military history, an authentic tour de force, a work of scholarship and hard thinking, a book whose influence in its field will be marked. Mr. Keegan has several preoccupations: how has military history been written? what should it be? what are its problems? what elements of battle, of human conduct in battle, have and will transcend limits of time and mobility? His answers are rendered in compelling accounts of three battles fought within 100 miles of each other, but separated in time by centuries: Agincourt, 1415; Waterloo, 1815; the Somme, 1916.

Mr. Keegan's fixed opinion is that military history fails for two reasons: it exalts the role of commanders, ignoring or sliding past the question of the motivation of soldiers. Second, any "narrative account" of battle must unjustly impose a false, and therefore misleading, sense of order on its proceedings. It is what *moves men to fight* that should be the dominant issue in the history of battles; it is here that useful lessons can be learned. The narrative tradition of military history-writing, sometimes reduced to the absurd synecdochism of referring to armies by the names of their commanders,



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made much military history useful, rendered it merely "amusing." The tradition reached its apotheosis in the work of the general-historian Caesar, a man who was chillingly purposive and egomaniacal in war and writing: "These things having been accomplished, Caesar next turned his attention to the question of Vercingetorix."

The highly colored narrative can be just as misleading. Consider Gen. Sir William Napier's account of an English attack during the Peninsular War:

*Such a gallant line, issuing from the midst of the smoke and rapidly separating itself from the confused and broken multitude, startled the enemy's masses, then augmenting and pressing forward as to an assured victory; they wavered, hesitated and, vomiting forth a storm of fire, hastily endeavored to enlarge their front, while a fearful discharge of grape from all their artillery whistled through the British ranks.*

Obviously, commanders count for something. Their presence on the "field of battle," a constant of war rather than an isolated archaism, can be crucial in getting soldiers to do what they're supposed to do. Gen-

erals in Vietnam frequently dropped out of the skies: to "see for themselves," to be "visible," to rally and inspire and share the dangers. It is the other things that make soldiers fight that Mr. Keegan thinks should be at the heart of useful military history: religion, drink, drugs, patriotism, rage, "discipline," hatred, fatigue, the obligation to be brave in the presence of one's friends. Military historians of the future will have to be extremely patient in gathering their evidence; exhaustive collations of individual motivations and impressions must be made—not only as the basis for reasonable, useful generalization, but also as a corrective. For the problem with finding out why people do things, after the fact, is that they are likely to tell you either what they think you want to hear or what they think sounds the most plausible basis for their behavior.

It is not likely that the practice of military history will attract many new recruits. It is less likely that those it does attract will be willing to acknowledge, and carry out, what seems to be the increasingly joyless and painstaking research that will yield the kinds of military history Mr. Keegan describes and demon-

strates in *The Face of Battle*. Dis-sent, said Burke, was most despised when most needed. The same might be said of useful military history.

There is also the question of whether such research historians will be able to write readable narrative. If they cannot, they will have only themselves to read—and blame.

As to the influence and genius of great generals—there is a story that Enrico Fermi once asked Gen. Leslie Groves how many generals might be called "great." Groves said about three out of every 100. Fermi asked how a general qualified for the adjective, and Groves replied that any general who had won five major battles in a row might safely be called great. This was in the middle of World War II. Well, then, said Fermi, considering that the opposing forces in most theaters of operation are roughly equal, the odds are one of two that a general will win a battle, one of four that he will win two battles in a row, one of eight for three, one of sixteen for four, one of thirty-two for five. "So you are right, general, about three out of every 100. Mathematical probability, not genius."

*Josiah Bunting, president of Briarcliff College, is completing a novel, Under the Arch.*

## BOOKS IN BRIEF: THREE HEMINGWAYS

by Michael Malone

**Y**OU'RE MARKED for Life," the poet Ernest Walsh told the young Hemingway. So he was. For *Life*, *Look*, and *Time*, too. And so, of Papa whose art is eleven books of fiction, we can now know more (thanks to twice that many posthumous books of faction) than we care to know, or should care to know, about anyone, even complete strangers like Marilyn Monroe. We have had the word from his critics and competitors, from his hunting pals, his high-school chums, his only brother, his oldest and his second-youngest sister, and, most recently, from his third son and his fourth wife. We know what Hemingway thought, bought, caught, and shot, we know his lies and his lays, when and where and with whom he did everything he

ever did. We know the color of his urine samples (dark prune) and the measurements of his boat's beams (1¼ by 1¾ inches). All this about the man who insisted that his life should be "no more important than my body will be when I am dead," who put every barricade he could devise in the way of biographers, including a codicil forbidding publication of his letters; the man who knew and dreaded the fact that, as he put it, the jackals, laundry listers, and hyenas would be chewing away at his corpse the minute he died.

So, after a "seven-year siege," the Official Biographer, Carlos Baker, gave us the official, indispensable, and undigestible biofactory—564 big pages of small print, followed by 100 more pages of sources for such per-

tinent information as "EH ignores view outside window," "EH's boredom with diet," "EH shoots buzzards."

Baker painstakingly mortared in the spaces in the 1966 *Papa Hemingway* by A. E. Hotchner, who had adapted Hemingway's stories and novels for television and his life for Random House. Hotchner assured us that he knew Papa's "dreams and disillusion, his triumphs and defeats" for the last fourteen years "right up to the day he died." In sharing all that, he gave us a lot of Papa-talk in clipped cabalese that sounds like a cross between Tonto and Mr. Jingle in *Pickwick Papers*. Subsequently, Hotchner has proved to have slipped us a few ballroom bananas, though probably fewer than the ones Papa slipped him, dis-



guised as the true gen; for the earnest biographer repeats stories with a faith that would have revived Tinkerbell, about Papa plugging Nazis and his making love in the kitchen of the 21 Club to a stranger who left \$300 in his pocket, and proved to have been Legs Diamond's moll. A liar by trade should be able to count on his audience.

**High on the Wild**, by Lloyd Arnold. R. O. Beatty, \$65.

This is a grand, glossy picture book in a limited edition signed by Papa's first son and talked (rather than written) by the photographer. It contains hundreds of photographs of the novelist holding up dead animals, some with unfortunate captions like "This boy was a better buck than me anyway!" Arnold was a longtime Idaho friend, a likable man, and one of those easy, outdoors, unliterary people with whom Hemingway was at his best.

**Papa: A Personal Memoir**, by Gregory Hemingway, M.D. Houghton Mifflin, \$7.95.

In welcome contrast to Baker's *Whole Hem Catalogue*, Dr. Gregory Hemingway's book is very short, and approved by Norman Mailer, who is graceful under the pressure of a brief preface. Mr. Gig, the third son, pigeon-shooting champion of Cuba at eleven, now a doctor hoping to make enough in royalties to move out to Idaho and hunt, writes with a vivid honesty about how it felt to have Papa for a papa. The first thing he tells us is that at a cocktail party a man hit him for making a sarcastic remark about his father's suicide, and that he broke the man's nose, knocked out two of his teeth, and ripped off half his ear. He adds that while the man lay there unconscious, aspirating blood, all he could think was "Damn. I might have been able to take papa on the best day he ever had." Mr. Gig also shot eighteen elephants in one month, and hoped to make love to Miss Mary. But then, he admits his dream had been to be a Hemingway hero, and, in fact, his short chapters read like Hemingway stories at times, the best about his father chasing German subs in his fishing boat in order to heave bombs down their hatches.

**How It Was**, by Mary Welsh Hemingway. Alfred A. Knopf, \$12.50.

Mary Welsh Hemingway is the last, the long-term wife, and now her husband's literary executor. Since for years Carlos Baker and others had relied on her diaries and recollections for their data, it is fair for her to have her own say. Before she was Mrs. Hemingway, Miss Mary was a writer, and she writes very well. The pre-Papa chapters might have been a book by themselves. Covering World War II for *Time* magazine is in itself more interesting than cooking chicken tarragon for Ernest Hemingway, but of course it is Papa that we want to hear about, the last secrets secreted from behind the bedroom door. Thankfully, the author has always had too much dignity to give us too much of that. And yet, of what she does give us, Mrs. Hemingway is often somehow both too close to the facts and too remote from their meaning to give us the man.

That is the problem with all these books; it is as if the sheer multiplicity of *things* in Hemingway's energetic and extroverted life (trips, sports, wars, wives, injuries, illnesses, heroics, quarrels, and conquests) so inundate his biographers that they lose perspective, and give us works as confusedly packed as his life was—with anecdotes, lists of camping equipment, snatches of dialogue, disconnected data. They seem to find the content of lived experience too large or too chaotic to find the form to fit it. When anecdotes do overlap, the focus shifts from book to book, usually bringing the author to the forefront and eliminating the competition by revealing what Papa *really* thought of them. Like the proverbial blind men describing the elephant by each touching a different part of his body, there is little consensus and no generic definition. You can't press powerful binoculars against each inch of the elephant's hide; to see in focus you have to step back. Malcolm Cowley does that in two short essays on Hemingway in *A Second Flowering*. Less is more, as Papa told us. □

*Michael Malone is the author of two novels, Painting the Roses Red and The Delectable Mountains, and of the forthcoming Psychetypes: A New Way of Exploring Personality.*

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# THE RELUCTANT PORNOGRAPHER



Hans-Georg Rauch

Reflections on a brief career

by Burton Wohl

**L**ASCIATE OGNI SPERANZA, I thought, entering the pornographic publishing firm where I was to remain for a year. The porno-fac, I called it, because it was truly a factory, turning out tons, carloads of the stuff every month. This was no cottage industry, though it did have its ma-and-pa aspect. No, it was huge, sprawling, covering many acres, housed in many buildings, some contiguous, others scattered over a quarter-mile radius, all located in an industrial zone of Los Angeles so hideous that to go there was to risk terminal dismay.

There was no escaping, no accommodating oneself to the squalor of the place. Pornography is squalor, a stain, not merely indelible but also irreducible beneath God knows what sort of overlay. Try art, anthropology, sociology, religion, psychology, try them all as a lens, a point of view, a *point d'appui*, and the stain remains. Adopt an attitude of elegance, even ingenuousness, and the yield is a sordid substance with a film of cant on top. Pornography, like sewage, bleeds into everything it touches.

Bleeds, yes, because the letting of blood, violence, is pornography's bottom line and not even the insatiable marquis could get beyond it. Power depends on violence, blood-

shed. And power is what pornography celebrates, illuminates—above all, sublimates. The other stuff, the tumid-humid-licking-sticking writhe-and-fall is peripheral, a catalogue of ornament like the botanical and architectural doodling in Renaissance painting.

Power fantasies can be and are made of such things as ministries, Mercedes-Benzes, Nobel Prizes, gold records, blue ribbons, red rosettes, green mansions. But all that is conscious material, waking material, satisfying only in part. Pornographic fantasies, on the other hand, shape themselves. We feel, not think, the satisfaction, feel it so exquisitely that some of us obtain momentary gratification, release from infant hunger. (For example, our consistently best-selling magazine featured enormous female breasts, breasts like melons, cathedral domes, planets. At the core of such yearning fury lies.) The raincoat people in the porno flicks suffer a greater hunger than you or I, perhaps, have fewer choices, but then few of us have all the power we think we need. We dream steamy dreams. We redress by undress. Some of us, in an excess of self-loath-

ing, reserve for ourselves the imagined role of slave. In our minds we perform low acts when we're feeling low. And by low acts I mean acts of abasement, reduction, acts which do not acknowledge the freedom, choices, sensibilities of another being. Nor does pornography acknowledge the realities of time, place, physiology, psychology, as Steven Marcus so shrewdly noted in *The Other Victorians*—"porno-topia," he called it.

One more point: so interconnected are the uses of pornography and power that vocabularies overlap. How often do political activists, decrying tyranny, take to the final epithet: obscene! Witness the drawings of George Grosz, a master at suggesting political oppression porno-iconographically. And Thomas Rowlandson's pornography, a substantial portion of his total work which remains to us, provides a sort of obverse, or backside, view of eighteenth-century England.

One of my assignments, while I was employed as a pornographer, was the production of a volume of Rowlandson's smutty aquatints. Planned as a "coffee-table item," the book finally came off the press, the plates faithfully reproduced on excellent paper and prefaced by a highfalutin introduction from some smarmy art

*Burton Wohl is the author of eight books, of which the most recent is Ten Tola Bars, which has just been published in a paperback edition.*



historian, all of it bound in gold-stamped linen and priced at \$20 a copy. It had, said Uncle Mortie, my boss, "a lotta class. We're gonna make a bundle." We didn't. We couldn't give it away.

**A**LTHOUGH MY despairing mood was the prevalent one in the porno factory, there were some for whom a career in pornography represented a rise in status. One of these was Gabe, a devout Jewish husband and father, who had owned and operated a gay bar on the East Side of Manhattan. His brother owned another. As I understood it, his family, orthodox as a dish of *cholent*, made their living from a clutch of gay bars. But for Gabe the hours were long, the cops were rapacious, the unions were intransigent, and too many clients were turning up with bike chains. He chose to sell out while he still had his health.

Gabe came West and was hired on at the porno-fac for a pittance, but he soon persuaded Uncle Mortie that he could effectively shake down wholesalers for debts outstanding. A

year after he signed on, Uncle Mortie presented him with a Lincoln Continental. The following Christmas he offered him another. Gabe protested. He already had a car. "That's simple," Uncle Mortie said, and he meant it. "You'll throw the other one away."

This tendency of childlike grandiosity was one of Uncle Mortie's most winning attributes. He was childlike in many other ways as well, not least of all in his person, which was shaped rather like an avocado. His face, too, with small, regular features and a little cupid mouth, was smooth and matte, much like an avocado seed and topped with well-trimmed fine gray hair. He must have been a pretty child. His voice was a musical tenor which would become resonant, when he was losing money, with a fine, Talmudic sadness. In a rage he sounded like a mynah bird.

These rages were occasioned, predictably enough, by legal actions undertaken by state, county, and municipal officers and—rarely—by private citizens or groups. Charges were filed with such regularity as to be metronomic. And like the metronome they

were totally extrinsic to the performance—an irritation, a preoccupation, part of the overhead. Either the case was dismissed at the hearing or a lower court conviction was reversed at the next level. Uncle Mortie and his pornographers, protected by the U.S. Supreme Court's inability or reluctance to adjudicate matters essentially dealing with questions of taste, played on and on and on.

Still, they got to Uncle Mortie, these police chiefs and district attorneys, county supervisors, state legislators, city councilmen, assorted clerics. Not merely were they obliging him to shell out more than a hundred grand a year for legal defense, not merely were they using him to run for reelection—"DISTRICT ATTORNEY OPENS WAR ON SMUT!"—not merely did they confiscate bundles of his magazines and sell them to nervous news dealers, but they called him monster, vicelord, and worse. "Me a monster!" Uncle Mortie's voice fluted into the upper range of incredulity. "Me!" He pointed a pudgy finger at his pudgy chest. And I had to agree, the charge was hard to credit. How could you fit a monster inside an avocado?

Uncle Mortie was being drenched with money, showered, flooded, hosed with it. However, he was a terrible businessman—capricious, wasteful, miserly, hesitant, impulsive, disorganized, shortsighted, gullible, paranoid, hopelessly inconsistent. As an administrator in charge of some 300 bodies, he was demonstrably worse. Why, then, was he successful?

The chief reason for Uncle Mortie's success was that he was there. He happened into the business, or more precisely, he was pushed. He had been publishing pin-up magazines, girlie magazines of the old, familiar, barbershop kind, just scraping by. The competition from other publishers, also scraping by, grew more threatening. They exposed. He exposed a trifle more. A nipple appeared. Uncle Mortie retaliated with two. And so it went. At the same time, he was being robbed by distributors, "cossacks." In time he found a cossack with whom he could become a partner. The man conveniently suffered a stroke and Uncle Mortie bought out the firm.

All he then lacked was the means of production. And this, too, he ac-



### Solution to the November Puzzle

#### Notes for "Chinese Torture"

A. SEAM (sounds like *seem*); B. ARMY (pun, arm-y); C. TOIL (hidden); D. VASE (anagram); E. DARK (prow of d[erelict]-ark); F. (d)RAKE; G. N.(A-N-N.)Y.; H. VOWEL (vow-le, reversal); I. A-WAKE; J. A-LA-MO(de); K. DRAM-A (a dram is three scruples); L. H(EAR)ER; M. NEEDLE (pun, sew-er, and second meaning); N. REARED (anagram); O. KINDL(E); P. MARKER (two meanings); Q. KNAVES (sounds like *naves*); R. SAV(OR)ED; S. MARINER (hidden); T. HER-RING (girdle as a verb); U. EN-GRAVED (pun); V. LAVA-TORY; W. SILKWORM (anagram); X. R-EVOLVE-R.; Y. THANK-LESS (pun); Z. DROMEDARY (anagram); AA. S(A-MARK)AND; BB. (O)VER-MILLION; CC. CLAIRVOYANT (anagram); DD. RAM-SHACKLED; EE. NARROW(MIND)ED; FF. STRANGLE-HOLD; GG. TRIGONOMETRY (anagram); HH. REAR-RANGE-MEN-T.

In construction, the column numbered 209-222 with cube 153 on top is the rearmost column; the column numbered 47-63 marks the right corner column; columns 169-183 on top and 87-91 below mark the left corner column; and column 8-18 on top of cube 202 marks the front corner column. This should provide enough of a fix to place the remaining pieces.

NOTE: In the solution to the October Puzzle, "Playfair Square," 20 down was incorrectly encoded as RCSBLS. The correct answer is RISBLS.



quired, not out of any far-seeing vision, but because he couldn't resist a bargain. Little by little he picked up a cheap rotogravure press here, an offset press there, a stapling machine, a paper cutter, a whole color separation plant "going for peanuts." He ended up with enough capital equipment to realize that dream of capitalists, the vertical enterprise.

He could now design and manufacture and market his product at a lower cost than his competitors. In addition, he earned enormous revenue by selling printing and distribution services to other pornographic publishers all over the country. It was normal in those days for a tyro pornographer to experience difficulty in finding a printer, even for premium fees. When he did find a printer, more often than not the ladies of the American Legion Auxiliary or the Daughters of the Eastern Star would come into the shop to see how their annual journal was progressing. One look at the porno page proofs which the printer had been unable to hide and they would chuff away in a trail of threats. Not infrequently, the printer was a Legionnaire himself, or married to an Eastern Star. He had no choice but to wash his presses out with soap and sweep the pornographer from his plant. In Uncle Mortie, these refugees found a friend.

ONE OF THE PROJECTS I worked on was an illustrated version of that old porno chestnut, beloved of Victorians and flower children alike, the *Kama Sutra*. These days, of course, the *Kama Sutra* is fairly commonplace and I shouldn't be at all surprised to learn that it is available for trading stamps. In 1969, however, and in California, we were just reaching the crest of Indo-Oriental pop culture. Remember Baba Ram Dass? Ginsberg on the Ganges? the *I Ching*? Tai Chi? litchi-nut ice cream at Baskin-Robbins? In addition, we had reached the corollary crest of mannerist lovemaking. It wasn't enough to be amorous on impulse and in an instinctual way. These impulses and instincts had now to be tutored, structured, even staged. Experts, counselors, guides appeared. Clinicians spoke briskly of "problems" and of themselves as problem-solvers. Americans fled the back seats

of their autos. There were lights, manuals, unguents, scents, drugs, music to be purchased, there were procedures to be followed, states to be attained. As with so many Eastern disciplines (or Western perceptions of same) which were thought to yield serenity and clarity, the result was often tension and bafflement. I suspect that all this pseudo-Indic liverwurst has sent some people scampering for the cloisters and others into the John Birch Society.

In any case, I had suggested to Uncle Mortie that we undertake what had, until then, not been done, that we illustrate the *Kama Sutra* with beautiful color photographs. "Unbelievable!" Uncle Mortie said. "Class. It's gotta have class. We'll sell it for \$19.95." I'm sure he also said, "We'll make a bundle."

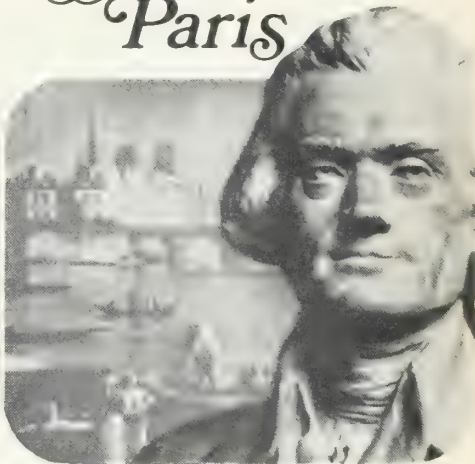
The text we had available was a poorly printed version of the original English one, which, as everybody now knows, is the work of one or more English pornographers. Far from being an authentic translation of ancient Hindu manuscripts, the *Kama Sutra* is a thinly flavored Victorian sex fantasy with as much relation to "sacred rituals" as British Railway curry is to a tasty meal. Our plan was to swipe this text, which bore a Bombay 1889 imprimatur, and so avoid payment of royalties. We would reset the text in an amiable, contemporary type face, print it on expensive stock, include forty or fifty color photographs, toss in bits of Indian cloth design for end papers, and—oh, yes, find some Ph.D. to write us a scholarly introduction. Class. All the way.

First I got in touch with a photographer I'd known years before who was uncommonly skilled at transforming lumpy, acne-spotted high-school drum majorettes into photographic sex goddesses. When Ron, the photographer, showed up, he was bearded, with waist-length hair and caftan, and had just returned to this country after a long stay in Malacca. His consort was a dumpling-shaped young woman from St. Joseph, Missouri, who wore harlequin glasses, a red spot on her forehead, and a garment made of mattress ticking. For all that, she was a dead ringer for Harry Truman and had his crisp, no-nonsense style. When I broached the assignment and the terms, Ron muttered, "Hey, man," and chewed

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James A. Alcott, *Publisher*

## THE RELUCTANT PORNOGRAPHER

on his betel nut, but Harry S—Ginger, actually—said quickly, "We'll do it, man. We need the bread."

The problem was models. I thought Ron would have dozens of people available for this kind of "gig," but he assured me that none was suitable. We needed young people who were beautiful, athletic, uninhibited, and who could also, in some degree, act. "No way," Ron said. "All we know is pigs and heads." Still, he and Ginger promised to get the word out, and I said I'd look through our files. He had access to some woodsy acreage in Northern California where they could photograph ad libitum without being busted. On that note we parted—Ron and Ginger for the Hollywood Hills, where they were living in his van, and me for the file room in the magazine division.

After scanning scores of photo stories I found one young couple who were outstandingly attractive. I telephoned the man, and he appeared in my office the following day with his female companion.

It is difficult for me even now to convey all the shades of embarrassment I felt when this young couple turned up in my office. Their beauty shamed me, made me painfully aware of my shabby surroundings. They had that quality of the godlike and the immaculate which occurs in some Californian youngsters and which occasions such awe among representatives of older cultures, as in London, Paris, Jones Beach. He was tall, athletic, dark-haired, self-possessed, Grecian in grace and profile. She was only somewhat less tall, tawny-haired like a lion and leonine in the strength and dignity of her gaze as well. Not merely smashing, the two of them, but even a touch formidable. Both were about twenty-two. Both were at UCLA, she a junior, he just entering the graduate division.

They knew each other from working together, or, as he economically put it, from "balling on film." But, he added, they didn't date or anything like that. I had noticed, of course, when she came in the door that she had the most adorable upper lip, but I found I couldn't quite look at her now and spent a few moments examining my hands. Finally, I managed to explain just what it was I had in mind, who would take the pictures, where, how much I could pay. It suited them very well.

They were enthusiastic about the chance to appear in something rather more ambitious than the standard magazine stuff. I think they honestly felt themselves to be a cut above the average and it was time they got the recognition they deserved. The *Kama Sutra*, she said, was a landmark work, like *Stanyan Street* or *The Lord of the Rings*.

Working on the *Kama Sutra* was the only time I had any traffic with people who modeled for the pornofac. Most of the people who appeared in the magazines—not my department—were lost souls. Not only were they stoned on one or more drugs, but they were the kind of hollow-eyed, deluded, self-absent young person one used to see—and does still—floating over the surface of California and heading, so many of them, and so inexorably, for ultimate bewilderment.

**W**HEN MY WORK on the *Kama Sutra* was done, Uncle Mortie summoned me and said, "Kid, how would you like to come into the family?" I pretended ignorance because I knew all too well what he was getting at. He offered me the presidency of one of his companies. "Actually," he said, pulling papers from his desk, "I have the contracts right here. Go ahead and read. Take your time." Uncle Mortie would pay me \$50,000 a year to start. I didn't, however, have to consider his offer, for it made my position in the porno factory clear to me for the first time. If I stayed, I should have to have put all qualms, reservations, reluctance behind me. I should have to have felt as I knew Uncle Mortie felt, that we were engaged in an estimable and defensible trade, that we were raking in no more than our due. I couldn't do that anymore. I thought that pornography was shabby stuff, squalid, that our profit came from human weakness, illness, even tragedy. I'd been taking Uncle Mortie's money under false pretenses for much too long. And like so many other writers who have, stony broke, lent themselves to this grubby business, I learned that the price I paid for those wages was rising all the time. Thanks, but no thanks, I said to Uncle Mortie. Live and be well. A few days later, I left. □



# *I asked our creative people:* Why use print?

By Carl Hixon  
Chairman of the Creative Review  
Leo Burnett U.S.A.



Worrying that I might be as retarded as the rest of the advertising industry regarding print and its creative possibilities, perhaps because I had been a vice president too long, I went into the kitchen and talked to the cooks. I queried the entire Leo Burnett Creative Department, asking:

"When and why do you like using print?"

Here is a sampling of answers, some of them matter-of-fact, others innovative and a few downright mystical:

"Nothing brands like print."

"When the product has a print soul."

"When my copy runneth over."

"When the television legals are after me."

"When I want complete control over production of the finished advertisement."

"When I need a touch of class (because television seems to make all things common)."

"When a very simple idea can be posterized."

"It's a terrible burden to have to persuade someone in 30 seconds."

"When I want to touch the conscience of my audience."

"When you can't even recite the strategy in 30 seconds."

"When you're selling hearing aids."

"You can choose your company in print but not in television because networks have neutral personalities."

To know about print it helps to know about print writing and print writers (print art directors, too). A print-chromosomed copywriter has a second sight into his\* medium. He understands that out there between all those pages are creative opportunities of cosmic proportions, but worries that everyone is too mind-set or chicken to try them.

These are some of the things he knows:

What a magazine does best is surround us with beloved objects, and information on how to use them, so that reading a magazine we become like gleeful little kids. This is the mood in which the print writer can court us—full of lovely, selfish feelings and wanting intimate things to be divulged.

Gentleness is a virtue, subtlety a persuasive tool in print. Ideas we privately approve but seldom recommend for TV because they lack bite or grab often flower profitably in some quiet meadow of print, soliciting the reader with sweet reasonableness and sanity.

Many products simply don't come to life within 30 seconds; not that they are complicated and need explaining, but because they exist on a grander scale and must be perceived longer. Anything less amounts to *lèse-majesté* and fails to express their inherent drama.

Besides being expansive in print, you can be baroque, grappling reader to ad with dozens of Lilliputian attractions. This is an exclusive property of print. In the hands of a gifted copywriter (and art director) it is worth a dozen finely focused commercials.

Psychologically, print writing is tougher than television writing. An artful presentation won't postpone the ash can, nor is there a collective responsibility shelter for the many collaborators on the finished product, should disaster strike. Don't look for cosmetic help from the director or music man. Don't expect lucky accidents on the set. The author and his ad—both naked and vulnerable—stand side by side in the harsh light of the conference room, awaiting summary judgment. Print writing builds men.

Most beginning writers have a blinkered bias towards television, believing their career tracks will be swifter and smoother in this medium. This is unwise in an evolving industry and society where some of the biggest budgets are now spent largely, even exclusively, in non-broadcast media. A creative novice today should aim to be an all-court player or he'll never make it—least of all at an agency like Leo Burnett, where many of our greatest case histories have been and will continue to be print-intensive.

Finally, I see by the papers that the newest business school theory to explain the role of advertising in our economy champions the advertising profession (double take!) because it distributes information to consumers which they would not otherwise get and thereby decreases alleged monopoly power. So as the original and still senior information dispenser, print now looks stronger than ever as a strategic medium.

**I think we'd better think it through again.**

\*Or her, as the case may be.





Sembene Ousmane directing Xala

## AFRICAN COMEDY

The right films are being seen by the wrong people

by Bjorn Kumm

**I**T HAPPENS, SURPRISINGLY often, that the director of Senegal's National Theater gets a short note in the mail from his uncle, the President. In the note the President will heap fulsome praise on the latest premiere or complain pointedly about details in the performance. Very little escapes his attentive cultured eye—or ear, for that matter. If the newscaster at Radio Senegal one sleepy morning mispronounces a name or gets the time wrong, Radio Senegal can be sure to get a brisk early morning call from *Monsieur le Président*. In Senegal, they sometimes call him the father of the nation. Some members of the opposition, feeling he is a bit too nosy, call him *le concierge de la nation*.

There is, however, not much doubt about Poet-President Léopold Sedar Senghor's active and continuing interest in his country's cultural life. When the Swedish Academy sometime in the future breaks through the color bar, he might even get the Nobel Prize for his rather effete poet-

ry praising an African tradition he spent most of his life outside of and far away from. In the meantime, he has been active trying to achieve something of a cultural reputation for his small West African country. And so it is probably not entirely coincidence that Senegal today is the first African country with something that looks like a thriving film industry.

Film is nothing new to Africa. There seems to have been some resistance in the beginning. Industrious Lebanese businessmen are known to have threatened recalcitrant chiefs in the interior of Senegal that their villages would be burned down if they did not manage to get their subjects to the following evening's movie performance. This is supposed to have happened around 1912—and at least one village is reputed to have been incinerated. Since then, movie houses have mush-

*Bjorn Kumm, a Swedish journalist, reports on Africa and Latin America for the Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet and the Toronto Globe and Mail.*

roomed all over Africa, with no further reluctance on the part of the tribal chiefs.

The owners often are Lebanese or Indian or Greek, but they are being bought out these days by newly nationalistic governments. Distribution is in the hands of French or British companies. The films, typically, are the cheapest ones available. Endless Indian movies, with a lot of singing and sighing and panting are popular, even though there usually are raucous comments from the front row when viewers feel the hero is not aggressive enough. "Give'im!" they will shout. "Kiss 'im [or worse] now! You no be man?"

So-called spaghetti Westerns, made in studios in Rome, are also widely appreciated—and Charles Bronson was well known all over Africa long before he made it in the U.S., if he ever did. You can see kung fu movies wherever you go in Africa these days, at a ticket price of 10 cents in the cheapest seats (not covered by the roof, so you risk getting drenched during the rainy season). But if you



want to see African movies, then you had better travel to London or Paris where all the new avant-garde African films, a few dozen of them, can be seen at the Cinémathèque or, late nights, on BBC 2.

Nigerian dramatist Wole Soyinka's one and so far only film creation, *Kongi's Harvest*, the story of a West African tin-pot military dictator, ran into as near a boycott as could be imagined among his country's Lebanese cinema owners. When they finally put the film on, in the upper-class air-conditioned movie houses which cater mainly to resident Europeans and well-to-do Nigerians, it ran for a few days in the major Nigerian cities and then disappeared. Whether the African grass roots wanted to see a real African movie, as a contrast to Bruce Lee and Rajat Gopal and all the other Wild East-erns, remains an open question, since they were never given the choice.

**N**EARLY ALL THE right African films are being seen by the wrong people—people like you and me, comfortable in our industrialized Western habitat where we can snugly watch African “folklore.” In the film industry as in so many other fields, Africa is exporting its best products to those who can pay—the wealthy former enemies in the West—while the sons of the soil go starving.

One of the few African filmmakers who can claim with some justification that his films have been seen not only by the Cinémathèque and cultural institute crowd is the Senegalese writer and director Sembene Ousmane. One of his most recent films, *Xala*, has been shown all over Senegal, in the villages and in the towns, and although it was edited, nobody was threatened with incineration. In fact, it is not unimpressive that this film, which is a scathing criticism of the new African elite, could be shown at all.

“Those very honorable gentlemen with their very honorable wives—they didn't like the film,” says Ousmane. “They hated it. They wanted to cut the buttocks of the young girl who is going to get married. I saved her buttocks. They managed to cut the scene where the beggar says, ‘We don't mind at all going to prison, because those who are in prison get

food, lodging, are being cared for—and they don't pay taxes.’”

You cannot, Sembene Ousmane is fond of saying, make the revolution if you don't have the courage to assassinate your own bourgeoisie. In *Xala*, he has gone a fair distance in that respect. *Xala* is the story of El Haj, a typical member of the rising African elite. He is a successful businessman, one of those who made it in new independent Africa as the colonials pulled out. So successful is he that when the movie begins El Haj is about to get married, for the third time, to a young beautiful bride, hardly visible under the flowing veil but clearly appetizing, veritable lamb's meat for old El Haj, who is being slapped on the back at the wedding reception by his business associates, by the President himself, by all the men in this male-dominated society who noisily point out to him, “We have to preserve African tradition. What is an African man without many wives to prove his success and his virility? We can't accept these foreign European ideas of one man, one wife. Polygamy is the African thing.”

Not everyone is happy, though. Among the unhappier people present at the wedding reception are El Haj's two earlier wives, each of them established in her own house with her own children, both of them annoyed at the prospect of having to share their husband with yet another wife. The unhappier of the two is the second wife, who realizes that she is no longer as young and attractive as when she displaced wife number one, and has to face the bitter fact that she is now being pushed aside in exactly the same way.

For El Haj, this ought to be the crowning summit of a long and successful life. The President of the Republic attends the wedding reception, lots of Very Important People have filled the surrounding streets with their sleek, black air-conditioned Citroëns. There is a big orchestra, there are well-dressed ladies who proudly expose the 50,000-franc notes that El Haj and other notables have pinned like medals onto their prominent bosoms. The wedding cake is five feet tall, with a white bridal couple at the top.

And yet El Haj is not the happy man he ought to be. He too is a victim of social convention. He would

not mind fresh lamb's meat, not at all. But is he up to the challenge? When the bride's mother and aunt sneak into the bridal suite on the morning after the wedding night to cut the neck of a chicken and bloody the sheets in order to show an admiring group of relatives that the bride was truly a virgin, El Haj is sitting dejectedly in one corner of the room, and the young bride says, with a very African matter-of-factness, “Nothing happened.”

Naturally, El Haj, the true-blue male chauvinist, cannot accept that his age and human physiology have finally caught up with him. He has to find a reason: somebody has put a spell—a *xala*—on him.

As the story proceeds—and at times it does become a bit drawn-out—El Haj looks for possible enemies. He appeals to crafty witch doctors and wise men to find out who exactly has taken his manhood away from him. Toward the end, Sembene Ousmane himself seems to have accepted the idea that there is indeed a spell cast over El Haj, the African newly rich. It turns out that El Haj, earlier on in his career, managed to swindle the peasants in his homeland and get the title to valuable plots of land which he then proceeded to sell at a great profit. The peasants catch up with him. They move into his house in the city, to plunder his refrigerator and spit in his face. The film ends on a Truffaut-style frozen note: El Haj, the bourgeois, doing penance, humbly exposing his naked chest to be spat upon by the peasants. The Senegalese censors, “those very honorable gentlemen and their very honorable wives,” did not like the last scene either. No bourgeois likes being spat upon. But, says Ousmane, “we do spit a lot in Africa.”

Sembene Ousmane is not the only Senegalese filmmaker these days. A younger generation (Ousmane is in his mid-fifties) is growing up around him, and with his help. The assistance from the Senegalese government and President Senghor could conceivably be greater. No ruling class likes to be told too often that it is impotent. French and U.S. subsidies help Africa's young and coming filmmakers. Again it is quite likely that all the right films will be seen by all the wrong people, while the African masses continue watching kung fu. □



# PUZZLE

## ALPHABET SOUP

by Richard Maltby, Jr. (with acknowledgments to Sam of *The Listener*)

**This month's instructions:** The numbers in parentheses indicate the lengths of the answers to the clues. Answers to Down clues should be entered directly in the diagram as usual.

The answers to the twenty-six Across clues each begin with a different letter of the alphabet. The letters in each answer are to be mixed and an additional letter prefixed so as to form another word, which is then to be entered in the diagram. For example, if the answer to a clue were ERA, the word to be entered in the diagram might be PEAR, PARE, REAR, WEAR, AREA, among others.

When the diagram is complete, each of the twenty-six Across entries (lights) also will begin with a different letter of the alphabet.

Answers to clues include five proper names and one foreign word. Seven are uncommon words; in the interest of fairness their clues are marked with asterisks. Of the seven, six are in *Chambers's Dictionary* (and others); the exception (1 Across) is in *Funk and Wagnall's*.

Across words in the diagram include one contemporary colloquialism, one uncommon plural, and two uncommon words, (13A and 34A), which are found in most dictionaries.

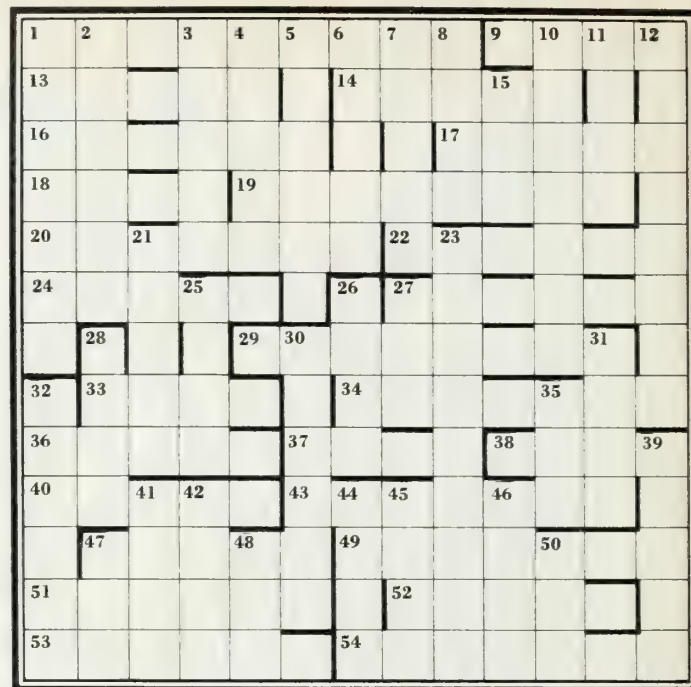
As a final help, the unchecked letters in the diagram may be rearranged to spell NEVER UNSURE, WE MUST GAPE, SCAN BROADCAST LETTERS.

As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

### CLUES

#### ACROSS

1. \*Boxer on a team hides acid salt (8)
9. Gray precious metal from which lead is taken (3)
13. *Gaslight* remade: *And Then There Were None* (4)
14. Product of Anjou? Almost! (4)
16. It could come from organ! (5)
17. Area for French movie unit (4)
18. Relative sort, almost (3)
19. Eveners spread about thin surfaces (7)
20. Shifts layers? (6)
22. Declined to be married without one (5)
24. Girl from Dalmatia (4)
27. Thrust of gravity in the moon (5)
29. Two couples getting a bit of a peck before showing of *The French Connection* (7)
33. Lousy offspring, if brought back, can (3)
34. Work around wild horse (6)
36. I hear you make sweaters—can you make me one? (4)
37. Baseball player? Give me time (3)
38. Live one gets by in Germany (3)
40. Wildcat drops her—gasp (4)
43. \*Blend of teas, for example, is first stuff thrown out (6)
47. Is taking a train back with key, for example (4)
49. They don't like broken hearts (6)
51. What's idly circulated about egghead? Give up? (5)



52. The drink Latin gives circus animal (4)
53. College administrators decide answers mid-term (5)
54. Instruments which give viral disease a set-back (6)

#### DOWN

1. Enough to support your first wife, for instance (7)
2. \*Cross up Frankie, the singer of hospitality (6)
3. Descendant in the ascendant, all right, inside sheltered places (5)
4. Loner slips sign up (5)
5. \*Relative to affirm old thief (6)
6. Positive response to a sailor holding the tide back in a place of seclusion (5)
7. Linger, like a road-maker (5)
8. Results in tears, right off (4)
10. Tablet in which Eastern philosophy is written in a box (7)
11. On describing me, I say what's to come (4)
12. Strippers sadly sundered (8)
15. Leaders of Japan's or Europe's prototypical GI (3)
21. Ladies proud of their family returned, one by one, and more than one spoke (5)
23. Ford, for one, has sexual union, then converts to mechanical means (9)
25. Fortify Norse Nobel Prize winner (4)
26. Place and time to hit with a club (4)
27. Shake up Indian sovereignty (3)
28. Scottish unwoven covers to avoid (4)
30. \*Inflammation of the tonsils makes five children lose time (a short year) (6)
31. Confederates have no use for rebuses? Just the opposite! (4)
32. Indian woman sitting on king in protest (6)
35. Say hello, then run (3)
39. Inside fish-like holder for artists (5)
41. Maiden's middle requires supporter (4)
42. Pale ground for request (4)
44. \*River, written in integers (4)
45. Look at and listen to homosexuals (4)
46. The thing starting the Derby, for example (4)
47. A bill for snorkel equipment (3)
48. \*In days of yore, it was held prior to beheading (3)
50. Having less than a complete personality makes you a little person (3)

### CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Alphabet Soup, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by December 10. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-

year subscription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the January issue. Winners' names will be printed in the February issue. Winners of the October puzzle, "Playfair Square," are Don Hughes, Elizabeth, New Jersey; Rodney Grantham, Atlanta, Georgia; and Richard Penberthy, San Diego, California.



# "Most insects spend their brief days on earth trying desperately to be diners instead of dinners."

Photo by Henry Groskinsky



"But although man has harnessed the atom, he may be losing the battle against bugs."

A bug's life is brief, but apparently not joyless: they reproduce so enthusiastically that they can mutate out from under the deadliest insecticide within months. It's war, and the bugs are winning. Which is why, according to a recent cover story in the Environment section of TIME Magazine, scientists are leading insects down the garden path with fake sex



The Weekly Newsmagazine

hormones and other frustrating chemicals.

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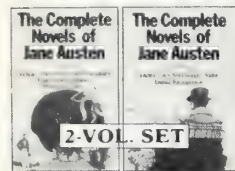
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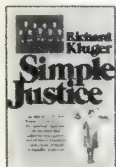
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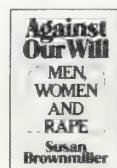
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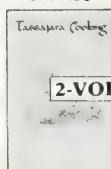
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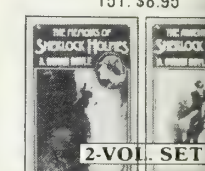
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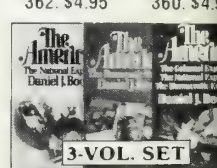
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